

Networking: The Linking of People, Resources and Ideas

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About the Network

Computer Use in Social Services (CUSS) Network is a nonprofit association of professionals interested in exchanging information and experiences on using computers in the social services. Members participate in the Network by:

- Sending materials for the CUSS Newsletter, such as: (1) member needs, interests, hardware/software use, activities, etc.; (2) information on resources members have found useful; and (3) longer reports/articles on conferences, surveys, vendor products, ideas, experiences, computer applications, and events. Those wanting longer pieces to be anonymously reviewed by CUSS advisory board members, should so indicate.
- Participating in the skills bank (see below).
- Participating in the software survey (see back page).
- Distributing Newsletters to friends and at workshops and conferences. If you're attending a conference where participants may be interested in CUSS, let me know and I will send newsletters to distribute or place on a resource table.
- Referring vendors to CUSS. If you think a vendor/consultant could benefit by exposure to CUSS members, tell them, so they can advertise their services and products in the CUSS Newsletter.
- Holding local CUSS meetings. Local meetings in Dallas/Ft. Worth and Chicago have been successful. For those in a foreign country, Floyd Bolitho's work in Australia offers a model to follow. Write Floyd

at La Trobe U., School of Social Work, Bundoora, Victoria, Australia 3083.

Network dues are \$5 for students and the poor, \$10 for individuals, and \$10+ for those willing to provide additional support. Those interested in joining the Network should write to Dick Schoech, CUSS Coordinator/Editor, The University of Texas at Arlington, Box 19129, Arlington, Texas 76019. Make checks payable to CUSS Network. Please indicate if you do not want your name provided to those interested in using the CUSS mailing list.

The CUSS Newsletter is published approximately 4 times a year and is sent free to all network members. Institutional and library subscriptions are available for \$15 a year. For overseas air mail, add an additional \$5 for postage. All prices are in U.S. dollars. Back issues of the newsletter are available for \$2.50 each. Volume 1 has 2 issues; Volume 2 has 4 issues.

The CUSS Skills Bank allows members to locate or share specific knowledge, skills and experiences. At present the skills bank permits searches by state or geographic area, by information systems experience and by application at the total cost of providing information about yourself. Suggestions on applications and expansion of the skills inventory are solicited. For more information contact Gunther R. Geiss, Adelphi U., School of Social Work, Garden City, NY 11530, (516) 489-2000 ext. 8083.

CUSS ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

- Floyd H. Bolitho, Assistant Professor, La Trobe U., School of Social Work, Bundoora Victoria, Australia, 3083
 Ray Carlson, PhD, Professor, School of Social Work, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3H 3J5 Canada
 Ram A. Cnaan, Lecturer, Tel Aviv U. School of Social Work, POB 39040, Jerusalem Israel, 69978
 Gunther R. Geiss, Associate Professor, Adelphi U. School of Social Work, Garden City, New York, NY, 11530
 Michael Gorodezky, Consultant, 107 N. Roby Road, Madison, WI, 53705
 James Gripton, Professor, U. of Calgary School of Social Welfare, 2500 University Dr., N.W., Calgary Alberta, Canada T2N 1N4
 Walter LaMendola, PhD, Associate Professor, School of Allied Health and Social Work, E. Carolina U., Greenville, NC 27834
 Duncan Lindsey, Chair of the Board, Perfect Software Inc., 61 W 34th Ave., Eugene, OR, 97405
 F Dean Luse, President, Outpost Inc., 119 Wilson, Park Forest, IL 60466
 Peter Marsh, Lecturer in Social Work Studies, Dept. of Sociological Studies U. of Sheffield, S10 2TN England
 Thomas Neudecker, Director of Continuing Education, U. of Pittsburgh School of Social Work, 2225 Cathedral of Learning, Pittsburgh, PA 15240
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 Lynn Vogel, Assistant Professor, U. of Chicago, School of Social Service Administration, 969 E. 60th St., Chicago, IL 60637

I wish to join the CUSS Network. Send to:

Dick Schoech, UTA, POB 19129, Arlington, TX 76019.

In Australia, sent to Floyd Bolitho, La Trobe U, Social Work, Bundoora, Victoria, Australia 3083.

In England, sent to Peter Marsh, U. of Sheffield, Dept. of Sociological Studies, Sheffield England, S10 2TN.

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Psychological Software Specialists, Inc.

presents... **The Psychologists' Computer Network**

The Psychologists' Computer Network is an electronic bulletin board for mental health professionals. To access The Psychologists' Computer Network you will need a microcomputer and a modem. By becoming a subscriber to The Psychologists' Computer Network you will be able to:

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- Get updates on new software products for the mental health professions
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- Upload and download computer files
- Meet professionals with interests similar to yours.

PURPOSE...The purpose of The Psychologists' Computer Network is to provide a low cost communication medium and resource for mental health professionals interested in computer applications for the mental health field.

A RESOURCE TO YOU...You can offer programs to others by leaving your name, address and program description in the electronic mail box or by placing your program on the system for others to use. You can send and receive private messages or leave messages for all subscribers to read. You can also get messages and programs from other subscribers.

HOW IT WORKS...The Psychologists' Computer Network is easy to use and self-teaching. No programming experience is needed. When you subscribe you will receive a phone number, password and operation manual. You access this service by dialing the number through your computer's modem and logon with your password. You can then send or receive messages, download programs or obtain current information about new software products.

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Psychological Software Specialists, Inc.
1776 Fowler #37
Richland, WA 99352



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Gunther R. Geiss, Ph.D. 8 Meadowlark Ln. Huntington, NY 11743	(516) 692-5414 or 489-2000	Consultation and Training (from executive to operators) Emphasizing Microcomputer Systems for Human Service Providers.
New York/New Jersey		
RFM/Associates, Inc. P.O. 56 Edgewater, NJ 07020	Rod Monger, PhD (201) 224-9895	Microcomputer and mainframe software programming, management development, training (including video), consulting, feasibility studies including cost-benefit analysis and documentation. Specialists in managing relationships between users and technical people.
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Australia		
Human Services Information Systems 6 Chapman Blvd Glen Waverly Victoria 3150	Floyd Bolitho, Ph.D. (03) 687-6790 (03) 459-1806	Consultation for Human Services, feasibility studies, training, systems design and implementation. Software Development and hardware vendor.

In an effort to connect vendors and consultants with those who need their services, the CUSS Newsletter lists vendors and consultants by name, address, phone number, contact person and a description of the services offered. The fee for this listing is based on the length of the description as follows.

Description length	Rate per issue	Rate per year (4 issues)
under 15 words	\$5	\$18
under 30 words	\$8	\$28
under 45 words	\$10	\$34
under 60 words	\$12	\$40

Interested vendors/consultants should send payment along with their description. Larger advertisements (up to a full page) are available.

Notes from the Coordinator/Editor

This issue represents a good blend of news, studies, system descriptions, advertisements, member activities and resources. The roster of CUSS Network members is being printed each Fall. The second annual CUSS Network software survey is seeking responses through this issue (see the form on the last page). A standardized format for the CUSS Newsletter seems to have evolved.

I am especially pleased with the longer pieces in this issue. They contain valuable information which unfortunately has few outlets other than the CUSS Newsletter. The article on commercially available databases is another in the Reinoehl and Iroff series concerning the "state of the art." The New York and Chicago surveys of human service computing illustrate how far we have to go to attain this "state of the art." The Apple announcement indicates how we can progress through a business/non-profit partnership. The two system descriptions illustrate two opposite approaches to computerization, "top down" and "bottom up." The CMHC in Dallas started with a formal study of the agency's needs and then compared their needs with the software packages available. The welfare department system in Australia was built with existing hardware and software and without a formal study of the agency's information needs. Both approaches seem valid, given the circumstances, and both have their problems. Can we attach any significance to the fact that the system designer from "down under" used a "bottom up" approach???

If you or your agency has produced a working document which might

be useful to others, such as an information requirements specification or system description, send it in. If it is too long, a summary can be printed and the document referenced. As the Chicago area survey indicates, few professionals in agencies know much about computers. What has helped you or your agency will probably help others.

The CUSS Network is pleased to announce the formation of another service for its members, a **CUSS journal** for more scholarly papers on the application of computer and related technologies to all areas of human services. Haworth Press will publish the quarterly journal. So, if you have had a paper in mind, but were hesitant to write because no journal seemed appropriate, wait no more. We will try to blend the practical with the theoretical and the timely with the timeless. The next issue of CUSS will provide further details. The CUSS Newsletter will be published as usual.

NOTE: If you teach a class or workshop on computers to human service professionals and want free copies of the CUSS Newsletter for your class, send your course outline, handouts, etc., for CUSS Network files along with the number of newsletters you need.

Dick Schoech,
CUSS Coordinator/Editor
August, 1983

Articles, Reviews, and Reports

Commercially Available Online Databases, by Linda D. Iroff and Richard Reinoehl, Consultants, Human Development Consortium, Inc., 25 North 54th Avenue East, Duluth, MN 55804.

A vast amount of information is available through the telephone lines on everything from the breeding and racing records of thoroughbred horses, to the wines to Europe and California. There are over 1500 computerized databases made available to individuals or organizations by approximately 200 online services over 10 publicly available telecommunications networks worldwide (don't panic—these terms are discussed below).

There are basically two kinds of databases: reference and source. Reference databases contain bibliographic citations and abstracts to printed materials (for example, journal articles, reports, conference proceedings, etc.) as well as referrals to non-print information (such as organizations, audiovisual materials, etc.). Source databases contain text and/or numeric information such as complete texts of journal articles or newspaper accounts, survey data, statistics, etc.

The databases are developed, maintained and updated by a variety of producers (institutes, universities, corporations, governmental agencies, etc.). Data is updated as often as hourly on stock quotations, but more usually monthly or quarterly. The producers then make their databases available through the online services. These services may handle anywhere from one to 200 databases, and an individual database may be carried by one to half a dozen services. Some of the most popular online services include BRS (formerly Bibliographic Retrieval Service), DIALOG Information Services, Source Telecomputing Corporation, and CompuServe, Inc. The first two carry professionally oriented databases, the latter two are more recreationally oriented.

The online services and their databases are then accessed through a tele-communications network. The most widespread networks, Telenet and Tymnet, can be reached with a local phone call from most major cities throughout the United States and worldwide. The more popular online services are often available through several networks.

All that you need in order to access a network is a microcomputer with communications ability (or a simple terminal) and a modem or telephone coupler. You dial the local phone number to reach the network, and then enter the appropriate codes and passwords to reach the desired service and database. For those without the proper equipment, or who would not use the service enough to justify membership costs, most university libraries and many public libraries have access to one or more online services.

The costs of using an online service are almost as complex as the services they provide. There may be membership or monthly minimum fees. Hourly rate charges for "connect time", the amount of time con-

nected to the service, can range from \$1 to \$300 per hour. There may be additional charges for the amount of central processing units (CPU) or system resource units (SRU) used (the amount of "effort" the computer goes through) and for the number of citations retrieved or printed. A typical search of a bibliographic database may take 10 to 15 minutes and cost \$20 to \$30. It could take several days to do the equivalent search manually.

As a specific example, we had a search of ERIC, which is one of approximately 60 databases handled by BRS. Our interest was in citations of articles concerning the use of goal analysis for evaluating juvenile treatment programs. We received 99 citations, with abstracts. The resulting 37 pages of printout cost less than \$20.

Listed below are some of the available databases in the social sciences, education and computer fields. For further information on online databases, contact the database producer or one of the major online services: BRS 1200 Route 7, Latham, NY 12110; DIALOG Information Services, 3460 Hillview Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94304; Source Telecomputing Corporation, 1616 Andersen Rd., McLean, VA 22102; CompuServe, 5000 Arlington Center Blvd., Columbus, OH 43220. See also Directory of Online Databases, by Cuadra Associates, 2001 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 305, Santa Monica, CA 90403. Also check your local public or university library.

Nationally Available Online Data Bases

Alcohol Information Retrieval Service

Producer: Rutgers University, Center of Alcohol Studies, Piscataway, NJ. Citations and abstracts to monographs, journal articles, technical reports, dissertations and conference proceedings related to alcoholism and alcohol studies. Covers items from disciplines of medicine, psychology, education, sociology, law, etc.

Child Abuse and Neglect

Producer: U.S. Department of Health Services, National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect, Washington, D.C.

Citations and abstracts of materials concerned with definition, identification, prevention, and treatment of child abuse and neglect. References to general literature, audio-visual materials, excerpts of laws, research, and listing of U.S. service programs.

Drug Information and Alcohol Use/Abuse

Producer: University of Minnesota, Drug Information Services, Minneapolis, MN

Citations and abstracts to monographs, journal articles, conference papers, instructional guides, films, etc., dealing with sociological, psychological and education aspects. Coverage of evaluation of treatment, family therapy, use of MMPI, etc.

Family Resources Database

Producer: National Council on Family Relations, Family Resource and Referral Center, Minneapolis, MN

Citations corresponding to the Inventory of Marriage and Family Literature. Citations and abstracts from non-journal sources such as monographs, audio-visual materials, government publications, etc. Also contains references to non-print resources such as family study centers, programs, organizations, etc. corresponding to the Information Guide to Family Literature, Programs and Services.

NARIC

Producer: National Rehabilitation Information Center, Washington, D.C. Citations to print and audio-visual materials relating to rehabilitation of physically or mentally disabled. Includes reports relevant to professional and administrative practices and concerns.

National Information Sources on the Handicapped

Producer: U.S. Department of Education, Clearinghouse on the Handicapped, Washington, D.C.

Descriptions of about 300 public and private organizations that serve the handicapped. Covers federal agencies, service organizations, schools, consumer organizations, etc. Includes organization's name, address, telephone number and services provided.

ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center)

Producer: U.S. Department of Education, National Institute of Education, Washington, D.C.

Citations and abstracts to journal and report literature in the field of education and related areas, including all levels from early childhood through adult, testing and evaluation, counseling, guidance, special education, teacher training, etc.

Exceptional Child Education Resources (ECER)

Producer: Council for Exceptional Children, Reston, VA

Citations and abstracts to literature on the education of handicapped and gifted children, including physically, mentally, socially and emotionally disturbed.

NICSEM (National Information Center for Special Education Materials)

Producer: National Information Center for Educational Materials, Los Angeles, CA

Covers educational materials, eg. print braille, audiovisual, for handicapped. Citations and abstracts on materials for learning.

Data Processing and Information Science Contents

Producer: BRS, Latham, NY

Contains enhanced table of contents of computing journals such as Byte, Computerworld, Datamation, Personal Computing, and Popular Computing.

Microcomputer Index

Producer: Microcomputer Information Services, Santa Clara, CA

Citations and abstracts to review and commentaries relating to microcomputers and software. Covers over 32 microcomputer journals and popular magazines, such as Byte, Infoworld, Personal Computing and Dr. Dobbs Journal.

Online Chronicle

Producer: Online, Inc., Weston, CT

Contains news stories, analysis, public service announcements, and advertising on online database activities. Covers hardware, software, new databases, publications, book reviews, etc.

New York Survey on Human Service Computerization

from Robert Gunderson, Child Welfare Information System (CWIS)/Agency Information Management Service, 200 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016.

In November of 1982, CWIS sent a questionnaire to 2,892 human service agencies in the New York City area. The purpose of the questionnaire was to determine the current state of automation among human service agencies, and their automation-related plans for the next five years. A total of 212 responses were received in time for tabulation; another dozen were received too late to be counted. For our purposes, each response represents 13.64 agencies.

The following report represents the highlights of our analysis of the survey responses.

Agency Characteristics:

- The respondents ranged in size from an annual budget of \$10,000 to over \$99,000,000. The median budget size was \$376,000.
- 23.6% of the agencies surveyed received funding from the United Way, ranging from 0.1% to 22% of their operating budgets.

Size (by budget) of Agencies Responding to Survey (N = 193)

	%	#
A less than \$300,000	42	81
B \$300,000 - \$1,000,000	26	51
C \$1 M - \$3 M	13	25
D \$3 M - \$20 M	17	32
E over \$20 M	2	4

(19 agencies did not complete, or erroneously completed, this question)

Plans to Automate:

- Size of agency was directly related to plans to automate, although about half of even the smallest agencies (less than \$300,000 annual budget) planned to automate.
- In almost all size categories, the majority of agencies planning to automate intend to do so in the next year.

Percentage of Agencies (by budget size) Planning to Automate

Size	% Automating	% Within 1 yr.
A	49	21
B	69	35
C	88	60
D	88	69
E	75	75

Agencies Planning to Computerize by Budget Size and Years to Automate (expressed in percent)

Budget Size	Years to Automate			
	1	2	3	5
A less than \$300,000	43	30	5	23
B \$300,000 - \$1,000,000	51	29	14	6
C \$1 M - \$3 M	68	18	5	9
D \$3 M - \$20 M	78	18	—	36
E over \$20 M	100	—	—	—

(%s may not equal 100% because of rounding)

What Agencies Will Automate:

- Agencies with intentions to automate planned to computerize (in descending order) financial functions, word processing, client and personnel records, fund raising and mailing lists, and research functions.

Services Wanted By Agency Budget Size (expressed in percent)

	%					All Responses
Service/System	A	B	C	D	E	
Word Processing	15	9	14	23	33	15
Financial	23	21	30	30	17	25
Client Records	11	12	7	9	17	10
Billing	3	9	7	—	—	5
Personnel	8	13	7	9	17	10
Fund Raising	8	9	7	6	—	8
Mailing List	12	12	5	2	—	8
Research	7	5	9	6	17	7
Membership	5	1	—	6	—	3
Other	9	7	14	9	—	9

(%s may not equal 100% because of rounding)

Why Did Agencies Delay Automating:

- Agencies now planning to automate had delayed primarily because of (in descending order): expense, insufficient alternatives, lack of a critical need and being too busy.

**Reasons Expressed By Agencies
For Delaying On Decision
To Automate
(Agencies Now Planning to Automate)**
%

Reason	A	B	C	D	E	All Responses
Expenses	50	36	31	25	—	38
Fear obsolescence	—	—	—	—	—	—
Negative disruption	—	—	8	—	—	2
Org disruption	—	—	—	—	—	—
Unscrupulous vendors	5	—	8	—	—	3
Insufficient alternatives	9	14	23	17	—	15
Consultant required	5	—	—	8	—	3
Staged conversion	5	—	8	—	—	3
No critical need	18	29	—	8	—	15
Too busy	9	—	8	17	—	8
No custom software	—	—	8	8	—	3
Other	—	21	8	17	—	10

Factors in Automation Decisions:

- Among agencies up to \$3 million annual budget, economy was the major factor in an automation decision. Convenience was a critical factor among these agencies as well. Overall, not having to add staff and training/support were essential.

Major Factor in Making An Automation Decision for those Agencies Planning to Automate or Already Automated, by Budget Size and Factors

Factor	Size					All Responses
	A %	B %	C %	D %	E %	
Economy	47	36	26	18	—	33
Convenience	25	24	11	5	—	17
Not adding Staff	6	12	16	18	—	12
Vendor Reputation	—	4	—	—	—	1
Peer Reference	3	—	—	—	50	2
Expandability	6	4	5	18	—	8
Training/Support	3	4	21	18	50	11
Board Recommendation	3	—	5	—	—	2
Auditor Recommendation	—	8	5	9	—	5
Other	6	8	11	14	—	9

(%s may not equal 100% because of rounding)

Length of Time Agencies Took to Investigate Computerization Before Signing or Purchasing?

(87 responses)

	%
less than 6 months	40
6 months - 1 year	30
1 - 2 years	24
more than 2 years	6

- The speed with which agencies made automation decisions was surprising. 40% of automating agencies signed a service contract or purchased equipment less than 6 months after beginning an investigation of automation (70% within a year).
- Agencies located consultants in a variety of ways, the most significant of which was Board member contact (26%).

How Agencies Located Their Consultants

(42 responses)

	%
Board member contact	26
Auditor referral	10
GNYF/United Way	2
Federation/umbrella group	7
Previous consultant	2
Service bureau or auditor	10
Other	43

Current Status of Automation:

- 50% of all the agencies now use one or more computerized services, whether service bureau or on-site machine. 89.6% of these agencies plan further computerization.
- The major functions now automated are: financial (payroll, general ledger, accounts payable and receivable), mailing lists, and word processing.
- Agencies which automate (anything more than payroll) tend to automate many functions. Automated agencies had an average of 87.6 automated functions.
- By projecting our results over all 2,892 agencies surveyed, we find that in the next five years, 2,069 agencies plan to automate 2,891 functions, an average of 1,397 functions.
- With regard to fund raising systems, the number of individual donors an agency had ranged from none to over 100,000. 12.3% of the agencies planning automation had at least 1,000 donors (the number at which automation begins to be feasible).

Agencies Currently Automated by Current Functions:

(99 respondents)

	%
Word Processing	64
General Ledger	75
Accounts Payable	65
Accounts Receivable	61
Payroll	77
Case/Client Records	58
Billing	57
Personnel	57
Fund Raising	56
Mailing Lists	71
Provider Payroll	40
Research	43
Membership	46
Scheduling	45
Inventory	48
Other	14

(8.76 functions/agency)

102 agencies responded to all or part of current services and equipment section of the survey.

- 18% of all agencies now own, lease, or rent one or more computers (including word processors). By far (3.5 times the nearest competitor — IBM) the largest share of these are Radio Shack microcomputers (35% of the market).

Current Equipment

Radio Shack (Mod II or III)	35%
IBM mainframe or mini	10%
Apple	12%
Commodore	12%
IBM micros (5110, 5120)	8%
Wang	8%
IBM PC or Displaywriter	2%
Quantel	2%
Xerox	2%
Texas Instruments	2%
Basic Four	2%
DEC	2%
Data General	2%

(Total agencies = 38)

Total units = 49

Average agency had 1.28 computers)

Length of Time Agencies Will Take To Automate, (by budget size)

[Projected Numbers]

Budget Size	Years to Automate			
	1	2	3	5
A	256	179	30	137
B	265	150	73	31
C	225	60	17	30
D	338	78	—	156
E	44	—	—	—
Totals	1128	467	120	354
Grand Total:	2069			

Chicago Area Surveys on Human Service Computerization

from Charles T. O'Reilly, Dean, Loyola U. School of Social Work, 820 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60611

During the last two years the SSW has conducted three surveys of computer usage in social service agencies. Their purpose was two-fold; first, to find out the extent to which computer resources might be available for student instruction in the field course; second, to discover what social agencies might be able to use in terms of continuing education and computer networking.

One survey was addressed to the 104 field placement agencies used by the SSW, another questioned 134 Catholic Charities agencies nationwide about their use of computers, and the third asked for information from social agencies in the Chicago area. The latter survey collided with a similar one conducted by the local United Way and produced very limited results. This paper reports the results of those surveys and makes some observations about the introduction of the computer in social agencies.

Catholic Charities Agencies

The survey of Catholic Charities agencies produced 69 respondents for a 51% response rate. Typically these are multifunction agencies with professional staff and they operate at a fairly high level of professional practice sophistication.

The median agency had a professional staff of 21 persons and a total staff of 42. Some agencies were quite small, while others had staffs of more than 500 persons.

There were 28.7% of these agencies that had a computer. Some very small agencies had one while some very large ones did not. Twenty-seven agencies were sub-units of larger organizations and 14 of them had their own computer, while 18 of the total had access to the parent organization's computer. Some agencies had both their own equipment and had access to their parent agency's computer.

Nine of the 27 agencies with their own computer or with access to one, had social workers who knew how to use their equipment. They amounted to about 1.8% of the total social work staff. Only two agencies reported using their computer for research purposes.

Had agencies without computers considered installing one? Among the 39 agencies that had considered installing one, 8 (20%) decided to go ahead; 17 (43.5%) decided to defer purchase; and 15 (38.4%) decided not to install a computer. Cost seemed to be the main reason for deferral of purchase.

When asked if they would install a computer if the budget allowed them to do so, 44% of the agencies said, yes, and 32% said no. Apparently a substantial percentage of these agencies were not impressed with computers.

Allied to computer usage is the matter of word processing. Slightly more than one-fifth of the agencies had a word processor. Surprisingly, some agencies with large professional staffs that presumably generate a lot of paper work were without such equipment, while some small agencies had it.

In agencies with fewer than 40 professionals, 19% had a word processor compared to 31% of those with a staff of more than 40. While size seems related to possession of this tool, the fact remains that seven out of ten larger agencies did not have one.

The Placement Agencies

In the summer of 1982 the SSW surveyed its 104 field placement agencies, most of which are in the voluntary sector, for information about their use of computers, and 68 responded for a 65% response rate. These agencies employed up to 180 social workers with the median agency having 13 social workers.

Computers were found in 31% of the agencies, although in some cases the computer actually was not available to the social work unit participating in the study. Ten agencies had social workers who could use their computer. The 36 social workers with the expertise were 2.3% of the 1,559 professional social workers employed by participating agencies. Nine agencies reported using their computers for research purposes.

Of the agencies with computers, 29% also used a computer service for administrative purposes such as accounting, payrolls, etc. Half of the agencies with a computer also used a computer service and half did not. It should be noted that a number of the non-computerized agencies that did not use a computer service were agencies with sizable staffs and presumably had large workloads.

To test whether the size of the social work staff was related to having a computer, respondents were divided into agencies with less than 20 workers and those with more than 20. At that cutting point the agencies were about equally divided into those with and those without a computer. Apparently size did not determine possession of a computer.

Word processors were found in 23.5% of the agencies, and in these agencies about 40% had fewer than 20 workers, and 60% had more

than 20 workers. Among agencies with more than 20 workers, slightly less than half had word processors.

Chicago Area Survey

The area study bombed. This may have been due to its collision with a similar study done by the Chicago United Way, but also because of its timing; it was done in August. The sketchy results provide only general impressions similar to those from the other two surveys. Many agencies use computer services, but almost always for administrative purposes. A few very large agencies have their own mainframes for such tasks but not many use the computer for research or program planning, and not many of their social workers knew how to use the computer.

Comment

We concluded that if our school wants to familiarize students with computer usage in the placement setting it faces a serious problem. Few agencies are equipped to provide students with such an experience. Although almost one fourth of the agencies had a computer somewhere in house, it often was not available to social work staff and invariably was used only for administrative purposes. Students should be exposed to such usage but also need a more balanced view of computer applications. For the most part that would have to be provided by the School in other than a practice setting.

The fact that only 2.4% of more than 1500 social workers in these agencies were able to use a computer must be kept in mind as plans are made to acquaint students with computer applications. Hands-on experience outside the school will be hard to find for a large number of students.

Conclusions

The use of computers and especially smaller ones by social agencies has increased in the last few years, but is still at a beginning stage. Although interest is growing it will take a few more years to reach critical mass. Our experience suggests that it takes about two years after an agency begins to use a computer before their system runs smoothly. That time could be reduced through networking, but the elements of a network have yet to reach the point at which they would be a genuine resource for potential consumers.

Given the size of most of the agencies we work with, the microcomputer seems most appropriate to meet their needs. As microcomputers become better known, they become more user-friendly and their cost drops, the feasibility of purchase by even very small agencies will increase. The rate of introduction probably would increase if national bodies such as CWLA, FSAA and CSWE were more actively promoting computer usage as a tool for program planning and emphasizing its value in applied research and case management as well as for financial administration. Ultimately that would pay off in more agency efficiency and more effective direct service for clients.

Apple Computer Announces 35 more grants to Human Service Agencies

from Barbara Krause (408) 973-3719

or Mark Vermilion (408) 973-2916, Community Affairs Program, Apple Computer M/S 9L, 20525 Mariana Ave., Cupertino, CA 95014

June 1, 1983—Thirty-five community organizations from Maine to California have received grants from Apple Computer, Inc. to establish information networks based on microcomputers.

The grants, valued at more than \$206,000, were given to eight networks whose interests range from infant health care to employment opportunities for older citizens. Through the networks, organizations providing similar services and linked together by computer, enabling them to share information and resources.

"These organizations represent a great breadth of social concern, and we are pleased to grant them the technology that will help them in their work," said Mark Vermilion, Apple's manager of community affairs.

Under the grants program, Apple reviews proposals for networks and awards grants quarterly. A proposed network is evaluated on the benefits it provides to the community, its suitability for microcomputers, and its sustainability.

In addition to the infant health care and older citizen employment networks, other grants have been made to networks concerned with family violence, runaway youth, youth development, community development, waste utilization, and appropriate technology.

Five community service organizations in Appalachia are linked together through the Apples and Health Care Network for coordination of an outreach program of maternal and infant health care. It includes: the Center for Health Services, Nashville, Tenn.; The Guthrie Health Council, Guthrie, Ky.; the Douglas Community Health Center, Stanton, Tenn.; the Mountain Community Child Development Center, Duff, Tenn.; and the Friendship Health Education Center, Williamsburg, Ky.

The California Able Network will provide employment services to older adults in the San Francisco Bay Area. Members include California Able, Inc., Options for Women Over 40, and Self-Help for the Elderly, all of San Francisco, and Home/Health Jobs for Seniors, Walnut Creek, Calif.

Three organizations which work to improve services to victims of domestic violence have joined together to form the Family Violence Project Network. They include La Casa de Las Madres and the Family Violence Project, both of San Francisco, and the Women's Legislative Institute, Sacramento, Calif.

The New Jersey Runaway and Homeless Youth Network consists of four runaway and homeless youth shelters in the state, and will provide access to an index of youth and family resources. Together, Inc. (in Glassboro), Crossroads (in Mount Holly), Anchor House (in Trenton), and Project Youth Haven (in Paterson), comprise the network.

Chorizo (Hot Links) is a youth development network that will offer employment and referral services in five ethnically distinct neighborhoods in San Francisco. The network includes Horizons Unlimited, Young Community Developers, Community Educational Services, Bernal Heights YMCA, and Buchanan YMCA.

The Appalachian Network for Environmental, Educational, and Cultural Needs is a broad-based community development network that will share information about housing, volunteer programs, health, and employment services. Its members include: the Council of the Southern Mountains, Clintwood, Va.; the Appalachian People's Service Organizations, Cincinnati, Ohio; MATCH, Berea, Ky.; HEAD/FAHE, Berea, Ky.; and the Carolina Community Project, Charlotte, N.C.

Technical assistance services to community agencies that recycle waste material is the purpose of the Waste Utilization Network. Comprising the network are: the Institute for Local Self-Reliance, Washington, D.C.; the Bronx Frontier Development Corporation, N.Y.; Recycling Unlimited, St. Paul, Minn.; Ecocycle, Boulder, Colo.; and the Berkeley Ecology Center, Berkeley, Calif.

Four US-based organizations concerned with appropriate technologies for community self-reliance will share information and organizational resources within Econet. Econet includes: the Pacific Research Unit, Santa Cruz, Calif.; the Transnational Network for Appropriate Technology, Rangely, Maine; Volunteers in Asia, Stanford, Calif.; and the Farallones Institute Rural Center, Occidental, Calif.

"We are particularly pleased by the grants to the Appalachian groups, and to the groups outside California and the Eastern seaboard cluster," said Vermilion. "We are confident that the technology and its network application are viable in a great variety of settings, and we believe these grants will confirm our views."

Apple provides the equipment and training, and enlists the help of co-contributing companies who provide software, computer accessories, and services. Co-contributors include Software Publishing Corporation (PFS File and PFS Report), Visi Corp (VisiSchedule, VisiCalc, and VisiFile), Southwestern Data Systems (ASCII Express "The Professional"), Hayes Microcomputer Products (Micromodem II), Tymshare, Inc. (OnType electronic messaging service), and the International Apple Core (Apple Orchard magazine subscription and user group membership).

Apple donates an Apple IIe system, and Apple Dot Matrix Printer, Apple Writer software and training and support.

These grants mark the third cycle of Apple's Community Affairs Program launched in November, 1982. Previous recipients included 37 community organizations organized in nine networks nationwide.

Apple provides computer training for the grantees through the People's Computer Company (PCC) in Menlo Park, California. PCC, a non-profit, tax-exempt organization which publishes **Dr. Dobb's Journal**, a monthly microcomputer magazine, specializes in dissemination of microcomputer information. Its "ComputerTown, USA!" project brings

computer literacy to communities through schools, libraries, and a variety of individual programs.

Copies of Apple's Community Affairs Program guidelines can be obtained by writing to the address above.

Selecting an Information System for a Community Mental Health Center, from John Driggers, Associate Director for Support Services, Dallas County Mental Health/Mental Retardation Center, 2710 Stemmons Expressway, 1200 Stemmons Tower N., Dallas, Tx. 75207.

Critical to treating the community Mental Health center (CMHC) as a business is to oversee the enterprise relative to its performance against stated goals and objectives. In private enterprise, this is translatable to the comparison of revenues and expenditures, in terms of profit and losses. For the CMHC, this is translatable to determining how well the center is performing against service delivery targets and both revenue and expenditure budgets.

Of particular importance is the ability of the CMHC to conceive and implement systems to monitor the center continuously. Thus, a critical step in the management of a community center is the preparation of periodic management reports on the financial and other aspects of operations. All or most records previously maintained (such as the accounts receivable, accounts payable and service records) must be consolidated to present results of current operations to internal management, the Board and external authorities.

If a CMHC is to monitor its operations and measure its performance, then an integrated management information system (MIS) is essential. An MIS should be able to produce four major types of reports, including:

- (1) cost reports,
- (2) client service reports,
- (3) accounting reports, and
- (4) external reports.

To the extent possible, reports should be designed so as to satisfy both external and internal reporting needs with a minimum number of reports. The reporting system is the focal point of the interface of the center's management system. In this context, data from the budgetary system, the accounting system (both cost and statistical data), medical records and others are combined to produce the management reports.

The types of reports which the CMHC's system can generate relate directly to what goes into the system. We consider the following kinds of reports to be particularly critical to the operation of any community center, which in turn dictates what information must go into the center's management system:

- (1) Gross Service Delivery Volume Statistics - number of clients entering and leaving the delivery system; where they are coming from and going to; point prevalence; demographic characteristics;
- (2) Gross Service Delivery Production Statistics - inpatient days, length of stay and other classically biometric statistics, number of individual, group, and other treatment interventions; missed appointments; waiting lists; waiting time for appointments; reasons for termination;
- (3) Staff Productivity Statistics - hours worked; billable hours; non-billable activities; revenue generated; and
- (4) Financial Information - revenues; expenditures; accounts receivable; accounts payable; balance sheet; cash flow; turn-around time on receivables; budget status.

To be of particular use, such reports should be by cost center and/or specific program entity. In addition; they should not only report the current time period but allow for cumulative (year-to-date) totals and comparisons with other time periods.

TABLE I
Major Types of Reports

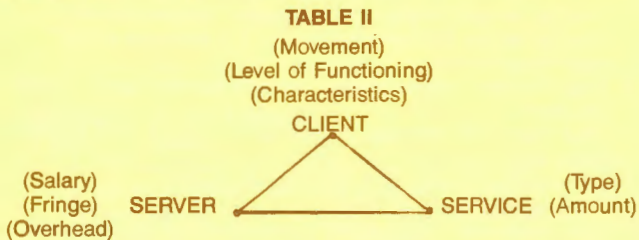
	Cost Reports	Statistical Reports	Accounting Reports	External Reports
Reporting System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outpatient • Inpatient • Partial • Administration • Total Program • Etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service by Program Entity • Service by Provider • Service by Payor • Etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trial Balance • Balance Sheet • Income Statement • Cash Flow • Aged Accounts Receivable • Analysis of Accounts Payable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NIMH • DMH • Title XX • Other
Purpose	The number and type of cost reports is dependent upon management needs for information for monitoring and.	These reports should be developed to interface with cost reports for rate review, manpower control, etc.	Accounting reports are generally intended to provide information for fiscal accountability.	External reports should be a byproduct of a good internal management system.

In most business institutions, including mental health centers, management must rely to a large extent on information contained in the reports because management itself cannot easily observe every event. Quantitative reporting provides the capability of checking routinely on the progress and status of programs so that you can nip problems in the bud or capitalize on unexpected good situations.

Operations can falter as a result of inadequate reporting, just as they can also be harmed by reporting overload. In preparing and distributing reports, a balance must be struck—provide management with sufficient information for proper decision-making but avoid burdening management and staff with irrelevant and meaningless data. The following two points should be kept in mind when determining who gets what reports:

- (1) Management by exceptions - carried to the extreme, this rule suggests that reports should be issued only when significant deviations from the plan have occurred. We feel, however, that quarterly and monthly planning and reporting are necessary to give management of treatment programs a clear understanding of the activities, in time to correct problems and/or change plans. In between the report dates information should be reported to management according to the management by exception rule—only when significant deviations occur, whether favorable or unfavorable.
- (2) Responsibility or accountability reporting—the type and level of information should be commensurate with responsibility and ability to control events. Thus, lower level management should get very detailed information on a small segment of the program's operations. For example, a cafeteria manager benefits from receiving detailed information on the planned and actual cost of food supplies, cleaning costs, etc. Middle management should get less detailed information covering a broader range of activities. For example, a residential facility manager benefits from information regarding the entire operation of the facility. Unless the summary information suggests a problem with food services (significant deviations), he or she does not require or benefit from detailed reporting of the cafeteria operation. Likewise, the executive program director requires less detailed information regarding specific facilities, since he or she is responsible for reviewing operations from a broader, more comprehensive program perspective. In summary, reports should highlight matters that are of immediate and resolvable impact and that are within the responsibility and control of the reader.

Finally, a management information system for a CMHC must help answer this question: **Who did what to whom at what cost and with what result?** To answer this question from staff to Board to funding agency level, the system's core can be depicted as a triangle:



By tying together who (server) provided what (service) to whom (client) the other two parts of the question—at what cost and with what result—can be answered. This triangle forms the basis for our management information system.

With these basic issues in mind then, the DCMHMR staff undertook a review of **existing** management information systems. We considered the other option of developing our own MIS; however, the development option would entail considerable additional cost and time to the Center when compared to purchasing an existing system. Therefore, if an existing MIS could meet most of our needs now and in the future, substantial costs could be saved and a system implemented and operational far quicker.

The major questions we had to deal with were:

- (1) How do we approach the problem of deciding which MIS vendor to believe?
- (2) Which vendor offers the best total package for us?
- (3) Which vendor should we buy from?

The question of how to approach the problem began with a definition of our needs. These needs can be grouped into three major categories:

- (1) Financial Operations and Reporting Requirements
- (2) Client Service Reporting Requirements
- (3) General System Requirements

Financial Operating and Reporting Requirements

The financial operations of DCMHMR include the various functions

of budgeting, accounting, accounts payable, accounts receivable, payroll and financial reporting. An MIS thus must cover the following areas:

- (1) Budget preparation and reporting which supports preparation of new fiscal year budgets and modifications and revisions to the existing budget. Budget reporting must include tabulations by revenue sources, program area, account number, and cost center.
- (2) Financial reporting to include revenue and expenses reports and asset and liability reports. Levels of extraction and summarization must be appropriate to this Center.
- (3) General accounting comprising a chart of accounts, the ability to establish and alter cost center definitions, the ability to specify various detail journals, the preparation of journal entry reports, trail balance reporting showing individual accounts and total balance, postings to each individual account by journal source, revenue and expense reporting to show receipts and expenditures for current period and year-to-date, asset and liability reporting, and adherence to the Center's accounting policy.
- (4) Fund accounting to account for revenues and expenditures by source of funds. This should include the ability to extract reports based on the source of funds, the ability to account for the encumbrance of funds based on purchase/contract commitments, the provision for either automated or manual distribution of expenditures to the source of funds used, and the ability to account for the application of matching funds. In addition, the system must allow for reporting of expenses and revenues based on variable fiscal years.
- (5) Payroll and labor distribution system must include an employee file, flexible deduction and tax code files, a check writing function and summary reports for check reconciliation payroll history, tax reporting and automatic distribution to the General Ledger.
- (6) An accounts payable system including automatic distribution of expenditures by location and cost center, vendor file, vendor payment history, discount allowance by vendor, job distribution expense reporting for Center maintenance functions and automatic distribution to General Ledger. This system must also include accounts payable check writing capability.

As the complexities of the financial operations have increased with new funding agency requirements and with the need to be accountable for the use of public dollars, the workload has increased commensurately. It was necessary to add two additional staff members in FY'81 to keep up with the increasing workload. Beyond the system requirements listed above, the automated MIS should increase the operational efficiency over the predominantly manual procedures we currently employ. Thus, a system should allow for full maintenance operations to the Chart of Accounts, allow on-line entry and editing of general journal transactions, provide automatic entry to standard journal transactions, allow General Ledger account inquiry interactively, and allow transaction detail to be kept on-line at least 18 months.

In addition to increased efficiency, increased control over financial functions should be a by-product of the automated system.

TABLE III

Pertinent Data Relative to DCMHMR's Financial Operations:

Total Budget:	\$12.5 million
Total Employees:	500
Net Payroll:	\$335,000 every two weeks
Journal Entries:	40-50/month
Line Items:	27-584/month
Standard Items:	550-1005/month
Line Items:	5,500-75,000/month
Accounts Payable Checks:	500/month
Line Items:	150-10,000/month
Manual Checks:	152-290/month
Line Items:	300-5,800/month
Funding Sources:	50 (2-digit code)
Cost Centers:	80 (4-digit code)
General Ledger Accounts:	1,000 (6-digit code)
Program Categories:	8 (1-digit code)
Disability Categories:	5 (1-digit code)
Unit Classifications:	6 (1-digit code)

Specifically, the system must allow for on-line editing for vendor and account code errors, frequent review of all check distributions, a reconciliation of all accounts monthly and increased case management capability.

Client Services Reporting Requirements

The Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation recent-

ly developed a performance contract with which to monitor and evaluate community centers in FY'82. The performance contract requires that periodic reports of client services be submitted quarterly to the Department. These reports will contain a comparison of actual versus planned performance measures including, for example, numbers of clients served, volume of service provided and cost per unit service. Even though these and similar performance measures have been required in prior years, these measures assume far more importance: state grant-in-aid revenues may be reduced if these performance measures are not attained. Clearly, our ability to monitor our own performance will be essential to identifying and solving problems early.

To keep track of some 12,000 clients each year and the myriad services provided to them presents an awesome task that only an automated system can handle. In addition, automation can help facilitate the clinical process itself by keeping clinicians apprised of their caseloads, appointments, follow-up visits and their clients' level of functioning. In short, the system must help improve the clinicians' ability to manage their cases.

At the program and center management levels, client services reporting must help monitor how the Center's most valuable resource, clinician time, is being used, and whether that resource is being used as planned. Furthermore, the system should assist management in reviewing continuity of care within and without the Center, where additional resources are needed and where resources are being used inefficiently or ineffectively.

The operating characteristics of the system must allow for the following functions:

- (1) An admission process to include the registering of clients admitted to Center services, demographic characteristics, case number assignment (6-digits), status at time of admission.
- (2) A transfer and termination process to allow for tracking of clients across Center units and case managers and movement out of the Center (discharge).
- (3) A service events reporting system to answer the question: **who** (server) provided **what** (service) to **whom** (client(s)) for **how long** (service time). Uniform reporting of services should allow for three levels of reporting in three major service categories (direct, adjunctive and indirect services).
- (4) An archival system for clients who are no longer active in the Center.
- (5) A name look-up capability should be included to help ascertain whether a client has been a Center client in the past.
- (6) An unenrolled client or identified contact process for entering services, usually screening services, to individuals who are not admitted to Center programs.
- (7) Finally, the system must meet all reporting requirements promulgated by the State as included in the performance contract and minimum data set for client services reporting.

At this point we have discussed the major operating and reporting requirements in the financial and client services areas. However, two additional requirements must be addressed, both of which actually fall somewhere between the financial and client services systems, but use data from both systems. These two additional requirements are (1) accounts receivable and (2) costing.

An accounts receivable system allows the Center to maintain a client and third-party billing system. As revenues from many sources have begun to decline or stabilize, first and third-party revenues have increased in importance. That portion of total revenues from clients and insurers now represents an increasing percentage of revenues. Thus, a system must allow for accurate fee assessment, up-to-date fee calculation schedules, posting of all payments received from clients or on behalf of clients, and tracking receipts by therapists, unit and program.

The costing system provides the final critical link in the system. This system uses the client service system and the financial system to arrive at a cost of service. The costing system should allow for arriving at the cost of service at a number of levels: by client, by therapist, by service, by unit and by program or level of care.

General System Requirements

As a rule, community centers devote only a small portion of their budgets to data processing. Similarly, centers cannot afford a large data processing staff or programmers, systems analysts, computer operators and the like. Thus, the installation and operation of an automated management information system must allow for these realities. That is, the characteristics of the system cannot overwhelm the abilities of its current staff to implement and run the system.

Some of the general requirements a system must meet are:

- the ability to query the data base without a programmer
- the ability to format new reports as needed
- the flexibility to change the system as new demands arise
- the ability to allow staff to use the system with minimum training
- the ability to grow over time both in hardware and software

After defining our needs to be met by an MIS, the next step was to find out how many companies or vendors there were who sold systems. We immediately narrowed the field to vendors of software who had installed a system in a community center—familiarity with the problems faced by centers was thought to be essential. Moreover, it was considered a plus if the vendor had worked with a number of centers, especially centers from different states.

Before going any further, it was clear that selection criteria would have to be established in order to evaluate each vendor's system, both software and hardware. An extensive list of 22 were drawn. The selection criteria are shown on Table 4.

TABLE IV

Pertinent Data Relative to Client Services:

Total Clients Served:	12,000/yr.
Admissions:	650/mo.
Re-Admissions:	300/mo.
Inactivations:	500/mo.
Clients Served:	3,500/mo.
Service Events	
S&R, Outpatient:	40,000/mo.
Partial Care:	860/mo.
Residential Care:	200/mo.
Inactive Clients:	30,000

The next step was to see an actual demonstration of each vendor's system. A number of questions, most derived from the selection criteria, were put to each vendor. In addition, each vendor was asked for a cost estimate of a hardware/software configuration to meet the volume requirements of our Center.

To approach the "believability" issue, an on-site visit was made to high ranking vendors to see a further demonstration of their system, to get better acquainted with their personnel, their qualifications and their commitment to marketing systems to CMCHs. In addition, CMCHs using the top ranked vendor systems were contacted for their response to the systems.

The functional capabilities of the system chosen by DCMHMR are listed in table VI.

TABLE V

Computer Hardware/Software Vendor Selection Criteria

1. Has the vendor worked with community centers before?
2. Has the vendor successfully installed a system in a center? How many?
3. Does the vendor have a fully developed hardware and software package?
4. Have there been favorable reports from centers who've installed the system?
5. Is the software written in a standard language?
6. Is the vendor financially stable?
7. How responsive is the vendor to software/hardware problems?
8. Does the vendor provide total support for both hardware and software?
9. Is the hardware expandable to meet future needs?
10. Is the hardware able to communicate with IBM equipment?
11. In the event of hardware or software failure, does the vendor guarantee a maximum response time?
12. Does the vendor plan to make periodic updates to the software?
13. How quickly can the vendor install a system?
14. How much does the hardware and software package cost to meet DCMHMR needs?
15. How flexible is the software formatting for producing necessary reports?
16. Are the files written and structured as a data base?
17. Is there a data base management system?
18. Can the system operate in both a centralized and decentralized mode?
19. How adaptable is the software to the idiosyncracies of our Center's operations?
20. Does the vendor have a good reputation?
21. Does the vendor provide training support prior to installation?
22. Are there other intangibles (good or bad) which should be considered in the selection?

TABLE VI

**Functional Capabilities of Chosen
Computerized Management Information System**

General Functions and Requirements

1. Data-based system - allowing for user-defined:
 - A. Data elements
 - B. Data records
 - C. Transactions and table/menu items
 - D. Data codes
 - E. Accounting structures
 - F. Organizational structures
 - G. Funding sources
 - H. Tax & deduction tables
 - I. Cost distribution factors
2. No programmer required to make system changes
3. Comprehensive system including clinical & administrative data bases
4. Integrated system including single-entry data elements merging of clinical and administrative data bases for costing, labor distribution and payroll, billing, automatic distributions and calculations. Integrates the "Basic Three": staff - event - client (**who provided what to whom**)
5. On-line editing capability
6. User-defined report generation without programmer intervention
7. Compatibility with Uniform Client Data System

Clinical Functions

1. Client data functions
 - A. Client transactions
 - B. Group transactions
 - C. Indirect service transactions
 - D. Generic case transactions
 - E. Family transactions
 - F. Add/change/merge/delete case registers
 - G. On-line inquiry - alphabetic/numeric
 - H. Print functions
2. Staff data functions
 - A. Staff transactions
 - B. Payroll system interface
 - C. On-line inquiry - alphabetic/numeric
 - D. Add/change/merge/delete staff registers
 - E. Print functions
3. Event data functions
 - A. Add/update/display event registers
 - B. Print function - staff/event summary
 - C. On-line inquiry
 - D. Event transactions - admissions, evaluation results, service event, treatment review, case management

Administrative System Functions

1. General accounting
 - A. Interface between accounts receivable and cash accounts
 - B. Interface between accounts payable and general ledger
 - C. Interface with client billing and accounts receivable
 - D. Prevention of journal entry duplication
 - E. Validation of journal entry of accounts payable
 - F. Automatic vendor discount computation
 - G. Multiple account distributions from single transaction
 - H. Maintenance of vendor history
 - I. Check preparation on request
 - J. Specification of automatic recurring journal entries, both fixed and variable amounts
 - K. Automatic interface between payroll and general ledger
 - L. Audit trail and posting summaries
 - M. Archiving process
 - N. reporting function
 - budget and budget variance by revenue and expense account with reporting unit and summary;
 - revenue and expense reporting by reporting unit, program, staff, organizational unit, unit classification, program category and summary
 - balance sheet
 - statement of changes in financial position
 - O. Fund accounting
2. Costing
 - A. Automatic proration or manual proration
 - B. Allow proration based on 1) percentage of base costs totaled, 2) percentage of hours or service rendered totaled, or 3) number of service events totaled
 - C. Cost by service, client, staff, profession, unit

3. Accounts Receivable
 - A. Update billing detail
 - B. Prepare statements and invoices
 - C. Apply payments/automatic posting
 - D. Compute/recompute fees
 - E. Display accounts receivable status
 - F. Aged accounts receivable reporting
4. Accounts Payable
 - A. Maintain vendor files
 - B. Purchase order input and update
 - C. Encumbrance and unencumbrance
 - D. Check preparation
 - E. Journal entry and general ledger posting
 - F. Payables listing
 - G. Maintain invoice file
 - H. Allow distribution of multiple account numbers and amounts
5. Budgeting
 - A. Maintain expense and revenue budgets
 - B. Maintain multiple budgets, e.g. original, current, temporary (trial)
 - C. Budget reporting including revenue and expense reporting for any account or range of accounts, for any unit or combination of units, including allocations of any single account or reporting unit to any other reporting unit or combination for any selected accounting period
6. Payroll
 - A. User-defined deductions, TSA's, shift differentials, hazardous duty pay, overtime rates, pay rate, allowable deductions
 - B. Calculate gross and net pay and deductions by type
 - C. Payroll detail report
 - D. Check listing
 - E. Check reconciliation listing
 - F. Automatic posting to payroll journal and general ledger
 - G. Prepare W-2's, 941's, 1099's
 - H. Sick leave and vacation accrual
 - I. Payroll reports

System Management Functions

1. Data base control function
2. File control functions
3. Edit control functions
4. Security and access control functions

Industrial Action Leads to Embryonic Information System, by Kirk Warren, Senior Social Worker, Department of Community Welfare Services, Upper Murray Regional Centre, P.O. Box 365, Wodonga, Victoria 3690, Australia.

During 1981-82 industrial action by field staff employed by the Department of Community Welfare Services led to the establishment of a Statewide "Workloads Formula", designed to set limits on how much work each fieldworker was required to perform. The impetus for this action came from years of unlimited demands on fieldstaff with consequent "burn-out" and poor job satisfaction.

The Workloads Formula, as developed, created a framework in which all the activities of fieldstaff, be they supervising Probationers, Wards of State, or working with community groups, etc., are allocated unit loadings. Each fieldworker can have a maximum of 100 units at any given time.

The relationship between activity and the number of units it is worth is complex and involves an assessment of how much "time" the activity requires, how much effort is required in terms of intervention, where the activity is placed in terms of Departmental priorities, and finally, how long the case has been on the "books". Intervention is maximized in the first three months of a case with unit reductions occurring in every block of three months after that.

Responsibility for managing the Formula and ensuring that fieldworkers' workloads are recorded and sent to Head Office on a monthly basis has generally been picked up by Senior Social Workers. What became apparent early in the implementation of the Formula is that as well as providing industrial protection the Formula is an "embryonic information system". For the first time the Department had a measure of what all fieldworkers were doing across all offices in the State. DCWS has 18 regions throughout the State of Victoria with some 250 fieldstaff.

The Upper Murray Region is a rural region with four fieldstaff. The remainder of this article will describe the implementation and management of the Workloads Formula as it applies to the Upper Murray Region (Wodonga office).

As already indicated, the reporting requirements are that regional aggregates (total figures for all fieldstaff across all activities) are sent to Head Office on a monthly basis. Compilation of these figures require

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D. LaMont Johnson, PhD
College of Education
Texas Tech University
Lubbock, Texas
(806) 742-2290

Editorial Address:

6905 Evanston
Lubbock, Texas 79424
(806) 794-4833

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Articles will go beyond the "how we did it" magazine article or handbook by offering a rich source of serious discussion for educators, administrators, computer center directors, and special service providers in the school setting.

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- tie theory to practice . . .
- relate present accomplishments to past efforts and future trends . . .
- emphasize conclusions and their implications . . .
- discuss the theoretical and philosophical basis for the application.

WHERE IS THE GAP?

Nearly all of the present periodicals dealing with educational computers fall into two categories:

1. Magazines or newspapers. Heavily advertiser-oriented and chatty in style, they provide articles by computer enthusiasts written for other computer enthusiasts. Their philosophy is: "Computers are here—they are wonderful tools; let's buy more of this or less of that." Little emphasis is given to the actual implications and issues involved in the new use of the computer in the formerly noncomputer environment.

2. High-level professional journals. They present articles by academicians and researchers who are writing to their fellow academicians and researchers. The serious educator, school service provider, or administrator may not have the time or ability to translate the terminology of the article and then figure out what applications (if any) would be relevant to his or her needs.

Computers in the Schools will fill the gap between these two types of periodicals. Articles will be written in comfortable language and will never force the reader to struggle for conclusions and implications. Articles will emphasize the practical—but will also tie in the available literature from the past and deal with implications for the future.

EDITORIAL PHILOSOPHY

Any movement which arrives with the speed and breadth of the small computer in the school setting is bound to have a far-reaching impact on the very nature of the educational process and on the special services provided by the school. This dynamic movement is just now beginning to develop critical issues, concerns, and controversies. There is a need to begin sorting out the flood of new printed material, software, hardware, and instructional or service methods now based on intuition, manufacturer-provided literature, or informal networks. **Computers in the Schools** will aim to fill this need.



FOR WHOM IS THIS JOURNAL INTENDED?

Articles in this new journal will aim to share computer applications so that they are useful for readers in different job classifications. For example, a computer program designed to enhance self-control in "acting-out" students will be of interest not only to the school psychologist, counselor, and social worker, but to the serious educator and administrator as well.

Articles are therefore aimed to enhance professional practice and development for:

- the director and supervisor of the school computer center or computer classroom
- the serious public or private school teacher
- special services personnel such as school psychologists, counselors, and social workers
- university professors and researchers of general education, special education, school psychology, educational psychology, and other applications
- educational specialty personnel working in the industry
- educational specialty personnel working in software production

SPECIAL ISSUES

The journal will regularly release special issues devoted to broad areas of current high interest. These issues will be announced within the journal itself. Individuals interested in guest-editing special issues are invited to contact the Editor and include:

1. a professional vitae
2. an outline dealing with the proposed special issue theme
3. a tentative list of potential authors

ABOUT THE EDITOR

D. LaMont Johnson, PhD, is a leading specialist in the area of educational computing and applications of computers in the school setting. Coauthor of *Computers, Teaching & Learning* (Dilithium Press, 1983), he has presented numerous professional papers and speeches at both state and national educational and psychological meetings and has authored over 30 professional journal articles.

His areas of technical specialization include educational computing, computer-assisted instruction, special education, psychoeducational assessment, learning disabilities, and educational and school psychology.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Computers in the Schools now welcomes the submission of manuscripts for review and possible publication. Publication will be contingent on the peer-review process. An "Instructions for Authors" brochure detailing editorial guidelines is available upon request from:

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a number of activities to be carried out. Firstly, physical lists have to be kept of each fieldworker's activities. Secondly, the units allocated have to be correct and a way of comparing the units with the length of time the case has been on the "books" has also to be established. Thirdly, all activities across all fieldstaff have to be grouped and the numbers of cases and units aggregated. Finally, an administrative system had to be developed to produce the required activities/outputs.

Prior to my arrival as Senior Social Worker the region had purchased a 48K Apple II, twin disc drive unit, with printer. As well, there were a number of "off the shelf" software packages. Plans existed in the region for uses of the equipment. However, these were not very specific in nature and came under the general heading "Information Systems". As I had some prior experience with computers (TRS-80, owned for 9 months), a strong interest in using them, an immediate problem (management of the Workloads Formula), I began the process of evaluating what the Apple and software offered and how it could meet my needs.

Software available was Personal File System (P.F.S.), including the Report Generator, DB Master, and Visicalc.

As I had preconceived notions about Visicalc being only suitable for accounting-type procedures, I deferred using it and started assessing P.F.S. and DB Master. It quickly became apparent that P.F.S. was the simpler of the two programs to understand and implement. This was due to a number of factors. Firstly, I found its documentation was clearer, well set out, and with plenty of examples. DB Master, however, was confusing, cluttered, and did not present its overall concept clearly. P.F.S., however, presents one simple concept; an electronic filing cabinet based on the filing cabinet sitting in my office. A big plus, as I could relate very quickly to the program explanations. The other plus of P.F.S. is that it is menu driven, with a limited number of options. My position now is for more options. However, as a beginner, a small number of options quickly brings about familiarity and an available system with output. The other plus with P.F.S. is that in the initial setting up stages you are presented with a blank screen upon which you can design your data input form. Just as I could design a pen and paper data sheet, so I was able to design one on the screen. Once saved, this input form is used on disc for all subsequent input of data.

Some quick experimentation with designing input forms clearly indicated that a great deal of information could be captured on any one Apple screen. I finally designed a form that met all my needs in relation to the Workloads Formula, and gave me other information as well. In all there are 18 fields covering such items as name, address, fieldworker, units, program, date allocated, date order made, expiry date, etc. On the Apple System, 900 (approximate) screens can be saved on any one floppy disc. The implications of this were quickly apparent. I could very easily have a system capable of recording details on 900 individual cases. In terms of the region this would represent clients over at least three years and more likely five years. The implications for building an historical data base were exciting.

Without going into any more detail along this line it is suffice to say that P.F.S. represented a software package that was easy to grasp, easy to implement, flexible (to a point), and gave me what I wanted at that point in time. It is of interest to note that Australia-wide P.F.S. ranks number 1 and 2 in units sold and \$ sales.

Apart from assessing software/hardware and moulding it to ones needs, the other consideration in implementing any computer system is the particular context one is operating in. This of course holds for any program implementation. The issues confronting me were (1) acceptance of my proposal, (2) how it impacted on existing administrative systems, (3) how to secure resources to maintain the system (i.e. keyboard operator). My experience to date is that universal principles hold as with implementing any proposal. However, with computerization still new and threatening more emphasis should be placed on high level support, and the development of a proposal that is simple to implement/maintain, and produces results that are beneficial as quickly as possible.

The system, as developed with P.F.S., has now "settled" and become part of the routine administration processes. A decision was made during the development stage that the basic information cycle would be on a fortnightly basis. I made this decision on the basis that a fortnight is the minimum period in which any real changes occur in terms of cases being opened/closed or a change in circumstances happens. Consequently all editing of the Clients' Data Base occurs within a two week cycle with reports being produced every second Monday. P.F.S. has the ability to produce reports based on any or all of the fields in the data input sheet. Currently every second Monday a report is printed on each fieldworker's caseload (Program, Client, Placement/Comments, Date Allocated, Order Date, Expiry Date, Units). Sub-counts are given for each program type in terms of cases and units. A total count for all cases and total units is given at the end. I receive a copy of each fieldworker's caseload, and they receive a copy of their own. As well, I receive printouts of contracted cases and cases awaiting allocation

to a worker. Built around the actual computer/software is a paper based system of input sheets. These sheets are a paper copy of what appears on the computer screen (V.D.U.). As cases are opened/closed, or changes occur in basic data they are entered on the sheet by myself or the field staff and placed in a tray in the computer room. These alterations are then keyed in every Friday morning which updates the data base. Usual backup procedures are in operation with myself holding a master copy and a working copy and backup copy held in the computer room.

Initially the aggregate information generated by P.F.S. was manually transferred to typed aggregate sheets and sent to Head Office. Problems existed with this approach as a draft had to be completed just for checking and the actual job of typing the form (although a once off exercise) was complex. Arithmetic mistakes also crept into the system.

It was at this point I started to assess Visicalc. Having never used Visicalc I was immediately surprised at how it suited my needs perfectly. Not only could I create my form using it and have it printed out, but Visicalc would add up all my rows and columns of figures (without making mistakes!). A bit of experimentation soon indicated that I could build all sorts of mathematical formulae to manipulate the workload figures.

The current Visicalc model reproduces exactly what Head Office wants, but has been added to in a number of useful ways. We now have a number of indices that

- (1) give an indication of total units in the region (i.e. out put) with varying numbers of field staff. (Good for arguing for extra staff.)
- (2) give an immediate comparison on a % basis, of where our effort is going between the four service systems (Corrections, Family, Community, Management). (Good for planning and relating to Head Office priorities.)
- (3) breakdowns between employed staff, voluntary workers and contracted cases.

Using Visicalc "window mode", "what if" type questions can be tested and the impact seen immediately on the indices, i.e. the impact of extra staff or an extra ten probation cases, or if we put 50 units effort into a community development project.

There is still a manual transfer of the information from P.F.S. to the Visicalc model (as it is not possible to transfer data automatically as it would be for instance from DB Master to Visicalc), however, the overall system saves time and is more accurate than a purely paper system.

In the space of six months the office has moved from "what's this technology all about?" to having a working computerized system, albeit relatively unsophisticated, and at this stage devoted to one specific task. What has been learned is that there is a definite process occurring which has moved from resistance/naivety to interest/idea generation/planning for other uses. This process has been described in systems literature on computerization as Nolan's Stages in Information Systems Maturity. Nolan has hypothesized that each organization passes through six stages in its progression from initial involvement with computers to a mature information systems environment. The stages Nolan has identified are: (1) initiation, (2) contagion, (3) control, (4) integration, (5) data administration, (6) maturity.

Looking back on the last six months, it is obvious there are a lot of plusses and minuses in how the process was handled. The methodology of computer implementation would of course argue for a systematic process of consultation with end users, with time and energy devoted to developing an integrated comprehensive system covering all facets of the organization, leading to the concept of information per se as an organizational resource like staff or fittings. The approach I took was the antithesis of this. Develop a use to satisfy my needs, largely in isolation of other users. The disadvantage I see in the "correct" approach is that there is a long lead time to produce a result and with naive users it would have been extremely difficult to maintain interest/involvement without a product. The advantage of the approach I took is that it satisfied a need and has demonstrated a product fairly quickly. As already indicated there has also been a growth of interest/ideas and sophistication in understanding and use.

This growth in interest/understanding (what Nolan calls CONTAGION) has led to a consideration of how can we develop a system that will integrate the various information resources we do have. To date we have done some systems work that groups our information resources into three areas. These are Statutory Clients, Community Profile, and Financial Monitoring. The programs and areas this Department is involved in can be grouped into these three areas. Along with this grouping is a consideration of what are the discrete data areas that exist and what are the required outputs in terms of reports.

Concomitant with this systems thinking, I am currently assessing D Base II. D Base II, which is CP/M based software is an extremely flexible program which allows a form of "programming" to produce information systems. Its strong potential, from my point of view, is that it allows the development of data bases which can be treated discretely, or (and

this is the big plus), it allows joining of data bases, or the selective use of particular pieces of data from a number of data bases being used in the same report. This sort of flexibility is impossible with P.F.S. The assessment of D Base II is early days yet, but I am hopeful of extremely useful results.

Personal Note:

I am enthusiastic about being a member of the C.U.S.S. and attach my subscription renewal for 1983-84. The newsletter has been invaluable in keeping up-to-date and generating ideas, and although there have been no C.U.S.S. symposiums in Australia, I am sure they are not far off.

Dick Schoech's comments about setting up an electronic network are exciting. The network would even be viable to members in other countries if it could be accessed through Telenet or Tymnet as this allows one to bypass using direct international calls (Plug!).

I am a subscriber to the SOURCE, (based in the U.S.), which I access from Australia via MIDAS (Computer Switching Network) by satellite to Telenet or Tymnet (Computer Switching Network U.S.) then to the Source. Much, much cheaper than direct telephone and also 100% reliable.

My electronic postbox on the Source is STB983. Members feel free to drop me a line.

Members Comments and Activities

Network Activities & Comments

(From the editor) Several readers felt that the review of dBASE II was not as positive as it should have been. A typical letter is one from Richard H. Calica, Executive Director, Juvenile Protective Assn., 12 East Grand Ave., Chicago, IL 60611, who states:

"Please find enclosed my check for renewal of membership in CUSS. I have found the Newsletter to be informative and exciting, as is your intent to set up an electronic network for CUSS member subscribers which would allow for much more timely sharing of information and experience."

"Your most recent Newsletter which contains software revisions was a delight to read. I was disappointed in the review which dBASE II received. Although not a programmer, I have found dBASE II to be extremely flexible, versatile and fast. It also shares facts with WORDSTAR, a valuable plus."

I know many CUSS members use dBASE II and are rather pleased with it. It has several limitations, for example, it can only accept 32 fields per record. To be proficient with dBASE II takes time, but for those who have problems with programming, ZIP, DBPlus, Quickcode and numerous other products are available to eliminate some of the programming and to make dBASE II more friendly.

Data base software is basic to most applications in the human services, so I was surprised last year that so few reviews came in. If you're using software that you like, please complete the software survey on the last page of this issue and send it in. Anyone out there using Lotus's 1 2 3, MBA or another database for small applications? What about clinical software? Is the software in the catalogues listed in CUSS worth the price? Let's hear from you so others can make intelligent decisions. Remember, exchanging information is the key to networking.

International Activities

HABR/Hospitalis automate brevis regesta/Development and application of case register by J. Laciga, secretary of research project, Psychiatric Hospital Havlickuv Brod 580 23, Czechoslovakia.

The great number of data emerging in psychiatric services leads us to use computers. It concerns the description which occurs on various levels about which one presumes that they have an influence upon the state of health. Our psychiatric hospital offers services to hundreds of inmates. We regard one way of seeing the improvement of the existing care in the application of computer techniques. The latter gives us possibilities to perform analysis of the influence of various factors. We hypothetically anticipate these to play a relevant role in the further destiny of our treated patients. Stimulations from these depicted analysis will serve to differentiate care for control of therapeutic programs and to decisionmaking in further plans of development. It will take some time before the data will be completely collected and the results of these analysis validated.

IBM PC in Clinical Practice (from Noel Thomas, Interaction Network, Inc., P.O. Box 128, Kapuskasing, P5N 2Y3 Ontario, Canada)

Please place our name on your list of professionals interested in computer use in social services.

I am presently a social worker in private practice specializing in needs analysis, program evaluation and strategic planning. We presently own an A.E.S. Plus 4 word processor with Qume printer and will be purchasing an I.B.M. Personnel Computer within the next few months. We

are especially interested in the use of computers for clinical practice and for information systems and databases.

Wang User Needs Demographics and Forecasting Software (from Andrew Joo, Planning Director, United Way of Calgary, 12D-13 Ave. S.E., Calgary, Alberta T2G 1B3 Canada)

Would you please send me any descriptive information you have about the "Computer Use in Social Services Network" organization. I found your name in an article in *Perception* (Vol. 6:4) magazine.

Last year, the United Way of Calgary installed a WANG 2200 system (using TOM program package) primarily to handle information relevant to our donor population. Now, we would like to plan for an expanded use such as qualitative demographic analysis and budget forecasting. I am hoping that you might have some names of organizations who have experience with the application of a WANG system, and who would share the mechanics of that experience.

Education Oriented Activities

Teaching Software, Lab Exercises & Other Resources Needed (from Menachem Monnichendam, Teaching Fellow, School of Social Work, University of Pittsburgh, 2317J Cathedral of Learning, Fifth and Bigelow, Pittsburgh, PA, 15260.

I note with pleasure that the CUSS network is growing both in number and scope.

Currently I am developing a two-semester graduate level course on computers in Social Work. The main issues will be Data Base systems, Decision Support systems and Clinical uses. The goal of the course is to provide computer literacy and to make social workers aware of the wide range of computer applications in the Human Services.

I am now in the process of evaluating and choosing relevant software and lab material exercises. I would greatly appreciate it if CUSS readers would share with me their course outlines and bibliographies for similar courses. Software or lab exercise examples would be especially useful.

Microcomputer Activities

Worker Productivity Assignment & Monitoring for Family Services Using dBASE & Osborne 1 (from Joel G. Sacks, Research Consultant, 274 Sycamore St., West Hempstead, NY 11552).

I teach at Yeshiva U. School of Social Work (Social Research) and am doing research at the Jewish Board of Family & Children's Services. It is as a result of the later, that I have become increasingly involved with computers. Often the results of a particular study have pointed to an information system which would have made available routinely what the project tried to gather in a haphazard, groping fashion. I own an Osborne 1 and have been trying to master dBASE II. I have helped to design a worker productivity assignment and monitoring system.

Clinical Applications for Victor 9000 (from Robert L. Hatmaker, 5150 N. Sixth St., #177, Fresno, CA 93710.

I am a professor of Social Work at Cal. State U-Fresno and have a part-time private practice in Clinical Social Work with my wife who is in full-time private practice - Clinical Psychology.

We have a Victor 9000 16 bit computer and print on a Diablo 630. We are very interested in the many possible uses we can make of our equipment in our work. Or even for play for that matter.

Larger System Activities

Use in Planning and I&R (from Catherine H. Raycroft, Ex. Director, Human Services Planning Council, 432 State St. #220, Schenectady, NY 12305)

We are interested in networking and do use computer services in our work — both at the planning level as well as information and referral. We are interested in expanding this capacity.

Multiple Applications on a Series IV (from Edwin Yowell, Director, Office of Management Design, 60 Hudson St., NY, NY 10013)

The New York City Human Resources Administration is the umbrella agency for delivery of all city social services; including public assistance, food stamps, medicaid and services for families, children and adults. HRA employs 22,000 people and is one of the largest municipal agencies in the United States.

Since 1979 HRA has been developing their Office Automation capabilities through the installation of Four Phase Systems, Inc. Series IV/65 and IV/90 systems. The Series IV models are integrated systems, permitting users to do the voluminous word processing documents required of such a large agency, and, at the same time perform local data processing applications. Currently, HRA maintains 22 Series IV systems with a total of over 400 CRTs. Eighteen of these systems are linked by electronic mail.

The Office of Management Design is responsible for the installation and development of Office Automation at HRA. OMD has programmed several applications which assist managers and executives in day to day work. These are:

- Staff Roster System (SRS): a local application, supporting the production of local office telephone directories and general and specialized staff rosters.
- Activity Calendar Technique (ACT): a local application automating users' MBO action lists to assist in the assignment of and follow-up subordinate's activities.
- Agency Information Distribution System (AIDS): a local application supporting updatable mailing lists and automated production of mailing labels.
- Correspondence Control (RSVP): a local application automating the tracking of vital correspondence through its receipt in an office to its response.

Each application has been programmed in VISION, the Four Phase language and is supported by an easy-to-use manual.

Since the inception of Office Automation, HRA has found increasing numbers of middle and upper level managers utilizing the administrative capabilities of the packages described. All staff levels are able to spend less time in paper-intensive, control and production activities. The benefits of time saved enables more efforts to be directed towards front line activities: planning and delivering service programs to Agency clients.

V.A. Hospital System & Software Distribution (from F. Dean Luse, President, OUTPST, 119 Wilson Park Forest, IL 60466)

Three news items for CUSS. 1. I am currently working on an info system for a VA hospital. The Social Work Service wants to track patients through the nursing homes and develop a means for accounting and for controlling the costs of care. The system is to also aid in making appropriate nursing home placements and to aid in the inspection and certification of nursing homes. We have made considerable progress and have a test segment running. The test module is already reducing unnecessary pharmacy costs. Terminals are on order and a training program is being developed.

2. A new survey is being done of the Chicago Metro non profits by a new group funded by local foundations. Sponsorship is more neutral than the last efforts and covers new technologies including computers, cable, and video communications.

3. While in Ft. Worth a few faculty indicated they were developing programs for use in their classes and suggested OUTPST as a marketing channel. If others have programs they wish to offer for broader use they should contact me. If there is a reasonable demand I will seriously consider offering such a service.

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Other Activities

History Repeats Itself: Man Attacks Machine (from George Hoshino, U. of Minnesota, Social Work, 400 Ford Hall, 224 Church St., S.E., Minneapolis, MN 55455)

It had to happen. A University of Minnesota student was arrested for attacking and damaging a computerized transcript machine. The University has six machines that provide quick transcript service. Evidently, the student became frustrated when the machine refused to cough up his transcript because of a "hold" that hadn't been cleared up, whereupon he wrestled with the machine and pulled it off the counter, severely damaging it. The student was restrained until he regained his composure and then hustled off to police headquarters where he faces possible charges, fines and a jail sentence.

Shades of the Luddites who, in England in the early 1800s during the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution, attacked the machines, believing that they were evil.

A modern Confucius would put it this way: Machines are great teachers; one can beat animals and humans to make them obey, but with machines one must rely on reason and rationality.

Psychological Software List Being Prepared (from Vivian Hayes, 13894 Putney Rd., Poway, CA 92064)

I am doing a masters thesis on Computer Applications to Psychotherapy. Included in this is a list of available software relating to diagnosis, initial interview, psychotherapy, and psychological testing. Any information which people or software companies are willing to share would be greatly appreciated.

Office for Open Networks (from Pat Wagner, Network Resources, P.O. Box 18666, Denver, CO 80218)

The office for open network is an information and idea exchange with account-holders in most states and several countries. About 75% live in Colorado. An account costs \$40 a year.

We try to supply mutually useful and interesting contacts for each account-holder's specific guests or needs. Our strength is in the diversity of people and organizations that use the service. We try to present minimum useful clues so users of our office can find a few good leads in a short time.

We do not take sides or support causes. Users of our office disagree about almost everything. We assume no common values among our users, but because of the nature of the tool we provide they tend to be imaginative and enterprising.

Our purpose is to encourage the emergence of a world where every human exploration can flourish.

Although we use computers in our work, we consider our office a generator of human networks, not a computer network. It is not necessary to have a computer to run or use an office for Open Network.

If you would like more information about our project: write for our information package - \$4.00. This includes entries selected from our computer system, so please let us know something about you or your project.

Software Search (from Sam Bell, Program Director, East TX Guidance Ctr., Inc., P.O. Box 6648, Tyler, TX 75711)

Below is a recent newspaper article on a San Antonio business which locates software for computer owners. It also helps prospective computer purchasers locate the software which best meets their needs before a computer is purchased. They might be interested in the CUSS Network; Network members might be interested in the service.

My agency administrator has turned down computers for now, but I still enjoy the Newsletter.

A two-year old San Antonio-based company is in the business of locating software, or the programs that tell a computer to organize a payroll, perform tax accounting or just play Pac-Man.

"We do have a unique concept and it is something that has a broad appeal if you consider everyone searching for a computer right now, which is about everyone in the American economy," Shirley said.

Sofsearch never physically handles the software, but rather uses its databases listing 30,000 "products" to match up the customers' computers — or hardware — with the programs that meet their needs.

Within about 48 hours, subscribers receive a one-page detailed description of each appropriate program and information on how they can contact the vendor or salesperson.

"We don't give them evaluative information on the product, but we do list how many people are using that particular program and the cost," Shirley said.

Customers who pay Sofsearch a \$175 subscription fee are entitled to five searches in one year, with each additional search costing \$35.

An average search turns up 10 to 30 possibilities, and Sofsearch keeps tabs on about 60 percent of the programs on the market, he said.

"We constantly have to review periodicals, ads, etc., looking for new software houses," he said. "We cover any type of packaged software product . . . micros, minis or mainframes."

"Any eight-track tape will work in any stereo. That's not the case with software," Shirley said. "As soon as you buy the hardware, you have effectively limited your options."

Thus the company also offers Sofselect, which helps customers determine which software package best meets their needs and only then

selects the computer to run it.

Sofsearch has about 10,000 subscribers in 30 countries.

Computers in Corrections Case Studies Needed (from Tom Isgar, 8761 Baseline Rd., Lafayette, CO 80026)

Wanted! Brief descriptions of the use of computers in corrections. The material will be used to select case sites for the training of administrators in corrections programs. Mail information to me at the above address.

Membership Roster

(alphabetical by state & then city as of July 15, 1983; newsletter exchanges not mentioned)

Alabama

Terry T Schansman, Rt #2 Box 300, Lacey Spring, AL 35754

Bruce B. Burson, Treasurer/Business Manager, United Methodist Childrens Home, P.O. Box 859, Selma, AL 36701

Alaska

John V. Hawk, 10 Diagnostician-Hospitality House, 1401 Kellum, Fairbanks, AK 97701

California

David Collins, Food & Nutrition Service Inc, 236 Santa Cruz Ave., Aptos, CA 95003

Amanda Smith, Research Asst-U CA-Berk, School of Social Welfare, 120 Haviland Hall, Berkeley, CA 94720

Walter R. McDonald, President, W.R. McDonald & Assoc. Inc., P.O. Box 834, Carmichael, CA 95608

Nancy Fanning, San Anselmo Children's Center, 199 Porteous Ave., Fairfax, CA 94930

Fresno Co. Free Library, Information Dept., 2420 Mariposa, Fresno, CA 93721

Robin Wilkes, Dir. of Social Services, Memorial Hosp - Social Services, 1420 S. Central Ave., Glendale, CA 91204

Chauncey A. Alexander, Consultant, Alexander Associates, 8072 Driftwood Dr., Huntington Beach, CA 92646

Ric Henry, Asst. Director, Loma Linda U. Med Ctr - Social Work, 11234 Anderson St. P.O. Box 2000, Loma Linda, CA 92354

Donald T. Lee, Chief, Committed Persons Pgm, L.A. Co. Dept of M.H., 2415 W. 6th St., Los Angeles, CA 90057

Lawrence Y. Lee, State Dir., Research/MIS, Children's Home Society of CA, 5429 McConnel Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90066

Morgan Lyons, Executive Director, California Research Ctr., 742 S. Hill St., Room 201, Los Angeles, CA 90014

Dale Silverman, Fiscal Director, Jewish Family Service of LA, 6505 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90048

Linda L. Remy, President, Loring Associates, 51 Loring Ave., Mill Valley, CA 94941

John A. Lemmon, Professor, San Francisco St. U - Social Work Ed., 5248 Boyd Ave., Oakland, CA 94618

Barb Denny, Research Associate, Ctr Health & Social Service Research, 155 South El Molino #202, Pasadena, CA 91101

Vivian Hayes, Student, 13894 Putney Rd., Poway, CA 92064

Ronald P. Boltz, Associate Prof., C.S.U.S.-Social Work, 6000 J. St., Sacramento, CA 95819

Jesse McClure, 6605 S. Land Park Dr., Sacramento, CA 95831

Brian Dugan, Resource Center Director, United Way of San Diego, P.O. Box 17720, San Diego, CA 92117

Frank Kastelic, Asst. Dir. Social Work, UCMC San Diego H-918, 225 Dickinson St., San Diego, CA 92103

James M. Haine, Director, 2534 Washington St., San Francisco, CA 94115

Arline Prigoff, Social Worker, 1908 Filbert St., San Francisco, CA 94123

Rick Zawadski, On Lok Senior Health Services, 1455 Bush St., San Francisco, CA 94109

CC Crisis & Suicide Service, P.O. Box 4852, Walnut Creek, CA 94596

Dennis J. Barkley, Computer systems Consultant, 952 Kenilworth Ct., Walnut Creek, CA 94596

Colorado

Nina Hoffert, Administrative Assistant, Family Builders by Adoption, 5800 Cody Court, Arvada, CO 80004

Tim Brennan, Research Psychologist, Human Systems Institute, P.O. Box 1761, Boulder, CO 80306

Robert M. Adelstein, Psych Social Worker—Private Practice, 2777 S. Elmira #11, Denver, CO 80231

Tom Isgar, 8761 Baseline Rd., Lafayette, CO 80026

Connecticut

Virginia Anton, Information Systems Specialist, Family Services—Woodfield, 800 Clinton Ave., Bridgeport, CT 06604

Robert F. Heltman, Program Manager - U Relations, General Electric Co., W2H2, 3135 Easton Turnpike, Fairfield, CT 06431

Peritz Levinson, Psychiatrist, Jada Lane, Greenwich, CT 06830

Marc Schwartz, Editor, Computers in Psychi/Psychology, 26 Trumbull St., New Haven, CT 06511

Margaret G. Cahill, Student-Fordham U. GSSW, 960 Washington Ave., West Haven, CT 06516

District of Columbia (Washington, D.C.)

Dennid P. Affholter, Senior Fellow, Center Policy Research, NGA, 1778 Willard St., NW, Washington, DC 20009

Larry Blair, B.I.A., Social Service Div. (Code 450) 1951 Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20245

Randall R. McCathren, Executive Director, CYSTEMS, 1346 Connecticut Ave., NW #310, Washington, DC 20036

Richard N. White, Research Associate, Bureau of Social Sci. Research, 1990 M. St., NW, Suite 700, Washington DC 20036

Florida

Betty B. Townsend, Systems Analysis/student, Broward Co. Mental Health Div., 6736 Farragut St., Hollywood, FL 33024

Peter Wahl, Brevard Co. Health & Social Services Division, 2575 No. Courtenay Pky, #128, Merrit Island, FL 32952

Ronald E. Nuehring, 6290 SW. 86th St., Miami, FL 33143

Erna J. Barnes, Executive Dir. Co. Council on Aging, 1019 West South Park St., Okeechobee, FL 33472

Richard E. Doelker, Assoc. Prof. U of West Florida - Social Work, Pensacola, FL 32504

Bob Broedel, Science for the People, P.O. Box 20049, Tallahassee, FL 32304

Walter W. Hudson, Professor, Florida State U - Social Work, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL 32306

Robert K. Klepac, Dir. of Clinical Training, Fla Sta. U. - Psych Dept., Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL 32306

Georgia

Barb Kiker, 828 Sunnyside Dr., Athens, GA 30606

R and J Mills, Faculty, Social Work & Govt Mana, U of Georgia, 109 South Homewood Dr., Athens, GA 30606

Kenneth A. Rice, EDP Manager/Program Analyst, Northeast GA Com MHMR Ctr, 1247 Prince Ave., Athens, GA 30606

Betty A. Cook, Asst Prof., Atlanta U - Social Work, 223 Chestnut St., S.W., Atlanta, GA 30314

Charles H. Hendry, Inpatient Director, 3540 Cochise Dr., NW, Atlanta, GA 30339

Rilla A. Murray, Senior Consultant, Consultec, Inc., Northside Twr, 6065 Roswell Rd., NE, Atlanta, GA 30328

Marshall A. Simpson, 5675 Cascade Court, Columbus, GA 31904

Hawaii

William Takaba, Director, Hawaii Co., Office of Aging, 34 Rainbow Dr., Hilo, HI 96720

Illinois

David P. Fauri, Director, Social & Community Services Southern Illinois U., Carbondale, IL 62901

Claire Anderson, Assoc Prof, U of IL Chicago Cir - Social Work, P.O. Box 4348, Chicago, IL-60680

Sally J. Barnum, Librarian, United Way of Chicago, 72 W. Adams St., Chicago, IL 60603

L.R. Bloomfield, Director of Evaluation, United Way/ Crusade of Mercy, 72 W. Adams St., Chicago, IL 60603

Richard Calica, Executive Director, Juvenile Protection Assn., 12 E. Grand Ave, Suite 300, Chicago, IL 60611

Richard K. Caputo, Dir. Dept of Research, United Charities of Chicago, 14 E. Jackson Blvd., Chicago, IL 60604

Patrick A. Curtis, 3950 N. Lake Shore Dr., #2315, Chicago, IL 60613

Judy A. Davis Doctorial Student, 1514 W. Jonquil Terr., Chicago, IL 60626

Joan W. DiLeonardi, Research Director, Children's Home & Aid Society, 1122 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, IL 60610

Clarence L. Fewer, Manager, Data Systems, Senior Cit/ Handicapped Office, 180 N. LaSalle St., Chicago, IL 60601

Rita Glass, Director, MIS, National Easter Seal Society, 2023 W. Ogden, Chicago, IL 60612

Liese L. Haag, Associate Director, Jewish Family & Community Services, One South Franklin St., Chicago, IL 60606

Martha L. Harris, Social Worker, 2951 S. King Dr., Apt. 315, Chicago, IL 60616

Margaret A. Jordan, Systems Analyst, United Way, 72 W. Adams, Chicago, IL 60603

Wynne S. Korr, Asst Prof., U of IL - Chicago Circle, Box 4348, Chicago, IL 60603

Philip Meighan, Marriage & Family Counseling, Rm 1901 Daley Center, Chicago, IL 60602

Baila Miller, SPSS, Inc., 444 N. Michigan, Chicago, IL 60611

Gayle A. Mitchell, Info. Systems Specialist, Jewish Family & Community Services, One South Franklin St., Chicago, IL 60606

Chas O. Reilly, Loyola U - Social Work, 820 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60611

John Schuerman, Professor, U of Chicago, 969 E. 60th St., Chicago, IL 60637

Lynn H. Vogel, Asst Professor - Assoc Dean, U of Chicago - Social Service Admin., 969 E. 16th St., Chicago, IL 60637

John D. Walz, Controller, Jewish Family & Como Services, One South Franklin St., Chicago, IL 60606

Cheryl V. Zandt, Consultant, Mana Training, National Easter Seal Society, 2023 W. Ogden Ave., Chicago, IL 60612

Joseph Zefran Jr., 4918 N. Hamilton, Chicago, IL 60625

Jeanne Van Kirk, Region II Area Agency on Aging, 213 Chamberlain, De Kalb, IL 60115

Lloyd H. Sidwell, Executive Director, Smississippi MH Center, Dixon - Sterling Freeway, Dixon, IL 60115

Robert L. Spector, Dir. Administrative Services, Council for Jewish Elderly, 1015 W. Howard, Evanston, IL 60202

Frank J. Laule, Executive Director, Catholic Charities, 411 Scott St., Joliet, IL 60432

Mary F. Seeley, Executive Director, Crisis Line of Will Co., P.O. Box 2354, Joliet, IL 60434

Mary D. Godley, Director, Alcohol Counseling Services, P.O. Box 365, Marion, IL 62959

David E. Kropp, Computer Systems/Marketing, Synergistic Office Systems, 510 N. Lake St., Mundelein, IL 60060

F.D. Luse, President, OUTPOST, 119 Wilson, Park Forest, IL 60466

Sue Nesbitt, Social Work Student, 13 E. Palatine Rd., Prospect Height, IL 60070

Gene L. Svebakken, Executive Director, Luthern Child & Fam Services, 7620 W. Madison St., P.O. Box 78, River Forest, IL 60305
Dan J. Pennell, Executive Director, G.B. Floberg Ctr for Children, 58 W. Rockton Rd., Rockton, IL 61072
Marilyn L. Flynn, Professor, U of IL - Urbana Champaign, 1207 W. Oregon St., Urbana, IL 61801
Gary L. Shaffer, Faculty Dir, Child Wif Tr. Ctr, U of IL - Social Work, 1207 W. Oregon St., Urbana, IL 61801-3789
Richard E. White, Program Evaluator, Lake Co. Mental Health Div., 3010 Grand Ave., Waukegon, IL 60085
Coral Moran, 221 Lawndale Ave., Wilmette, IL 60091

Indiana

Karen S. Haynes, Assoc Prof., Indiana U - Social Work, 1127 Atwater, Bloomington, IN 47405
Richard C. Bennett, Editor, The Business of Social Work, Listening, Inc., 8716 Pine Ave., Gary, IN 46403
David Hennage, Gary Health Assistance Corp., 1100 W. 6th Ave., Gary, IN 46402
Ray Koleski, Indiana U - Social Work, 925 W. Michigan, Indianapolis, IN 46202
Medical Psychology Dept, Community Hosp - M. Psych Dept., 1500 N. Ritter Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46219
John R. Hagen, Deputy Director/Mar & Res, Northern Indiana HSA, 900 E. 1 Colfax Ave., South, Bend, IN 46617
John W. Wallace, Assistant Professor, Taylor U. - Social Work, Taylor University, Upland, IN 46989

Iowa

Donald E. Maypole, Associate Professor, U. of N. Iowa, Social Work, U. of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, IA 50614
Gary L. Gansemer, Area Residential Care, 2909 Kaufmann Ave, Dubuque, IA 52001
Richard Echemacht, Psychologist, Mental Health Institute, 1200 E. Washington, Mt. Pleasant, IA 52641
Ken Hasseler, Social Work Program Director, Northwestern College, Orange City, IA 51041
Fred DeJong, Dordt College - Social Work, Dordt College Sioux Center, IA 51250

Kansas

James B. Taylor, Director, Human Services Institute, Box 1388, Lawrence, KS 66044
Social Work Library, Bethany College, Box 111, Lindsborg, KS 67456
Patti Root, Dir, Consumer Asst & Info., Area Agency on Aging, 2601 Anderson, Manhattan, KS 66502

Kentucky

Jacob Blackburn, KY Assn. for Community Action, 41 Fountain Place, Frankfort, KY 40601
Ruth B. Pickard, Assistant Professor, Northern KY U, Social Sciences, N. KY U, Highland Heights, KY 41076
Ronda S. Connaway, U of Kentucky, 407 Patterson Office Tower, Lexington, KY 40506

Louisiana

Joel Curran, Ex. Director, Family Counseling Services, P.O. Box H, Leesville, LA 71446
Social Services, DHHR, Office of CHNO, 1532 Tulane Ave., New Orleans, LA 70140

Maine

Caroline Lawry, Oncology Social Worker, 4 Osborne St., Fairfield, ME 04937
James D. Sorg, Northeast Research, 11 Glenwood St., Orono, ME 04473
Tom McDonald, Research Associate, Human Services Develop. Inst., U. of Southern Maine, Portland, ME 04102

Maryland

Richard Templeton, Psychiatrist, 429 Second St., Annapolis, MD 21403
Bob Elkin, U of Maryland - Social Work, 525 Redwood, Baltimore, MD 21201
Katie Jacobsen, Student, U. MD, Social Work, 2206 Lake Ave., Baltimore, MD 21213
David Kandel, 1323 W. Lombard St., Baltimore, MD 21223
Sister M. Laetitia, Administrator, Good Shepherd Center, 4100 Maple Ave., Baltimore, MD 21227
Walt Troyer, PhD Student, U Baltimore, Social Work, 4608 Roland Ave., Baltimore, MD 21210

Louisa Messolonghites, Editor, Prevention Resources, 4733 Bethesda Ave., Suite 735, Bethesda, MD 20814
Judith B. Rudolf, Asst. Dir of Services, Co. Dept of Social Services, P.O. Box 237, Frederick, MD 21701
Ying Ying T. Yuan, Social Services Consultant, 10624 Wayridge Dr., Gaithersburg, MD 20879
J, Kathy Phelan, Supervisor, Child Wif., Dept of Social Services, 958 N. Mulberry Ave., Hagerstown, MD 21740
Wendy M. Berlinrood, Doctoral Student, 3 Blue Spruce Ct., Reisterstown, MD 21136
John Goodman, Consultant, Libra Technology, 1300 Piccard Dr., Rockville, MD 20850
Kim Watson, PhD Student, Howard University, 3334 Claridge Ct., Silver Springs, MD 20902

Massachusetts

Bill West, 19 Wollaston Ave, Arlington, MA 02174
Lyle H. Miller, Professor & Chair, Boston U. Med. Ctr., Biobehavioral Sciences, 85 E. Newton St., Suite 915, Boston, MA 02118
Teresa Serafin, 40 High St., Chicopee Falls, MA 01020
Joan B. West, Assistant Director, Minuteman Home Care Corp., 20 Pelham Rd, Lexington, MA 02173
Frank Gallo, Gallo Associates, 45 Merrimack St., Lowell, MA 01852
Ilene M. Hoffman, Consultant, 366 Hunnewell St., Needham, MA 02194
Jeanne W. Anastas, Asst Prof, Smith College, Social Work, Lilly Hall, Northampton, MA 01063
James J. Callahan Jr., Director, Levinson Policy Institute, Brandeis U., Waltham, MA 02254
Robert Morris, Professor, Brandeis U - Social Welfare, Waltham, MA 02154
Jerry Mechling, Adjunct Professor in MIS, Heller School, Brandeis U., 9 Warren St., Winchester, MA 01890

Michigan

Aaron Brower, PhD Student, U. of Michigan, Social Work, The Frieze Bldg., Ann Arbor, MI 48109
Jesse E. Gordon, Professor of Social Work & Psychology, U of Mich - Social Work, Ann Arbor, MI 48109
John L. Hankins, PhD Student - Social Work & Pol Sci, U of Michigan, 112 Worden Ave., Ann Arbor, MI 48103
Yeheskel Hasenfeld, Professor, U of Michigan - Social Work, Ann Arbor, MI 48103
Elizabeth Mutschler, Asst Professor, U of Michigan - Social Work, 1065 Frieze Bldg, Ann Arbor, MI 48109
Paula S. Nurius, PhD Student, U of Mich, 445 Second St., Ann Arbor, MI 48103
Lawrence S. Root, Asst Professor, U of Michigan - Social Work, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48109
Chief Librarian, V.A. Medical Center (142D), Battle Creek, MI 49016
H.E. Thomas, Admin Asst., Tri-Co Head Start, 100 Phelps, Decatur, MI 49045
TIP Clearinghouse, Detroit Public Library, 5201 Woodward Ave., Detroit, MI 48202
Carrie Proctor, Senior Community Services Asst., 2950 Pingree, Detroit, MI 48206
DEC Inc., 398 Park Ln., East Lansing, MI 48823
John F. Nielsen, Director of Clinical Services, Psychiatric Consult. Services, 825 Parchment Dr., S.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49506
Gordon Williams, Psychological Tech Consultant, Psytek, 5582 Coral Way, Haslett, MI 48840
Robert J. Bykowski, Director of Social Work, W.A. Foote Memorial Hospital, 205 North East Ave., Jackson, MI 49008
John P. Flynn, Professor, Western Michigan U., School of Social Work, Kalamazoo, MI 49008
James S. Mickelson, Social Worker, Assn. of Children's Alliance, P.O. Box 20247, Suite 739, Lansing, MI 48909
Sarita Overton, Director, Community Services Job Club, 106 W. Allegan, 501 Hollister, Lansing, MI 48909
Norman Brokaw, Associate Director, Grand Traverse/Leelanau CMHS, P.O. Box 552, Traverse City, MI 49684

Minnesota

Donald Jones, Senior Evaluation Specialist, Hazelden Foundation, Eval Dept., Box 11, Center City, MN 55012
Doug Britton, Dir. Planning & Eval. Social Service Dept. SLC, 320 W. 2nd St. #408 Govt Ser Ctr, Duluth, MN 55802
Richard Reinoehl, Linda Iroff, Human Development Consortium, 25 N. 54 Ave E., Duluth, MN 55804
W.D. Gowan, Dir., Alcoholism Tx Ctr, Southland Recovery Ctr, Inc., 6950 France Ave., So. #202, Edina, MN 55435

William A. Anderson, Mankato St. U - Social Work, Box 49, Mankato, MN 56001
Jim Grogan, Acquisitions, Hennepin Co C2359-Govt Ctr Library, 300 South 6th St., Minneapolis, MN 55487
George Hoshino, Professor, U of Minnesota - Social Work, 224 Church Street S.E., Minneapolis, MN 55455
Philip S. Klees, Consulting Psychologist, Family Networks, Inc., 720 E. 26th St., Minneapolis, MN 55404
Gordon C. Krantz, Psych/Consult (Welf Dept), 5209 Woodlawn Blvd, Minneapolis, MN 55417
Anthony Wagner, Executive Director, Northside Settlement Services, 2507 Fremont N., Minneapolis, MN 55411
Carole Rydberg, 3225 Wellington Lane, Plymouth, MN 55441
Julie Burmeister, Director, 1992 Palace Ave., St. Paul, MN 55105
Joan Velasquez, Ramsey City Community Human Services Dept., 160 E. Kellogg Blvd #916, St. Paul, MN 55101

Mississippi

Pegues, Delta St. U., Social Sciences Div., Delta State University, Cleveland, MS 38733

Missouri

Ann Winegardner, Dir of Information & Referral, Freeman Hospital, 1102 W. 32nd St., Joplin, MO 64801
Larry Searcy, Project Director, United Com Serv. Act Together, 605 W. 47th St. 300-A, Kansas City, MO 64112
William H. Butterfield, Chairperson, PhD Program, GWB School of Social Work, Washington U., Box 1196, St. Louis, MO 63130
David L. Cronin, Asst. Dean, GWB School of Social Work, Washington U., St. Louis, MO 63130
James L. Hedlund, Director (Medical Psychology), Institute Psych - School of Medicine, 5400 Arsenal St., St. Louis, MO 63139
Michael Morrow Howell, 1100 Victory Ln #25, 12230 Sunset Terr., Sunset Hills, MO 63127

Montana

David E. Cummins, Associate Professor, U of Montana MBA Program, University of Montana, Great Falls, MT 59402

Nebraska

John H. Wineman, Dir, Intensive Teaching Pgm, Father Flanagan's Boys' Town, Boys Town, NE 68010
J.A. Hansen, Training Manager, 2611 So. 46th St., Lincoln, NE 68508
Reba Schafer, Comm. Ctr for Senior Services, 129 N. 10th - Rm 116, Lincoln, NE 68508

New Hampshire

Janet M. Collins, Dir. Social Work Dept., Mary Hitchcock Memorial Hosp., 7 Maynard St., Hanover, NH 03756
Lewis Feldstein, Dean, Antioch/N.E. Graduate School, 103 Roxbury St., Keene, NH 03431

New Jersey

M. Wasserman, Decision Systems, Inc., 200 Route 17, Mahwah, NJ 07430
Warren DuFour, Vice President, OCTO Limited, Martinsville Center, Martinsville, NJ 08836
Harriet Fink, Rutgers U., Social Work, CN-5058, New Brunswick, NJ 08903
Mildred Wills, Dept Community Affairs/Aging, 363 W. State St. CN807, Trenton, NJ 08625
John F. Boyne, Executive Director, Spaulding for Children, 36 Prospect St., Westfield, NJ 07090

New Mexico

Alvin L. Sallee, Head, Social Work Dept., New Mexico State U., Box 3 S.W., Las Cruces, NM 88003

New York

Richard Beer, Program Evaluator, MH, Office-MH, Bureau-Pgm Evaluation, 44 Holland Ave., Albany, NY 12229
Thomas J. Kinney, Director, Continuing Education Pgm, Richardson Hall-135 Western, Albany, NY 12222
Igor Koroluk, Dir, Services, Systems Dev., NYS Dept of Social Services, 67 N. Pearl St., Albany, NY 12243
Max Siporin, Professor, S.U.N.Y. - Albany, Social Work, 135 Western Ave., Albany, NY 12222

Dan Cohen, 216-05 47th Ave., Bayside, NY 11361
Beth Curatolo, Broome Co., Office for Aging, Co.,
Bldg. Government Plaza, Binghamton, NY 13901
Cynthia Freier, Data Manager, Maimonides Hospital
CMHC, 4802 10th Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11219
Roni Hammer, Dir. Pgm Analysis & Eval. Maimonides
CMHC, 4802 10th Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11219
Donald Loggins, Student, 723 E. 10th St., Brooklyn
NY 11230

Serials Department, Adelphi U. Library, Adelphi
University, Garden City, NY 11503

William G. Tymann, Ex. Dir., BB/BS of Nassau Co.,
240 Clinton St., Hempstead, NY 11570

Walter Huger, Systems Manager, Jamaica Services for
Older Adults, 92-47 165 St., Jamaica, NY 11433

Gunther R. Geiss, Professor, Adelphi U School of
Social Work, Garden City, Long Island, NY 11530

Sheldon Blitstein, Clinic Supervisor, Jewish Community
Services, 9 West Prospect Ave., Mount Vernon, NY
10550

Blase J. Adinolfi Jr., NYU School of Social Work,
3 Washington Sq. Village 15F, New York, NY 10012

Stephen P. Beer, Director of Fund Raising, The
Childrens Aid Society, 105 E. 22nd St., New York,
NY 10010

Susan Bagnini, Private Practice, 100 Oakland Ave.,
Port Washington, NY 11050

Gary O. Goldsmith, Clinical Dir. Adol Health Unit, THE
DOOR - Center of Alternatives, 618 Ave. of the
Americas, New York, NY 10011

Rita B. Black, Assist Prof. Columbia U - Social Work,
622 West 113th St., New York, NY 10025

Lynne P. Brown, Dir of Corp. Communication, CWIS
Agency Info Mana Service, 251 Park Ave. South,
New York, NY 10010

Bill Cohen, Publisher, Haworth Press, 28 E. 22nd St.,
New York, NY 10011

Arlene R. Gordon, Assoc. Ex. Dir. Program Services, N.Y.
Assn. for the Blind, 111 E. 59th St., New York, NY 10022

James O. Hackshaw, Professor, Columbia U., Social
Work, 622 West 113 St., New York, NY 10025

Paul H. Levine, President, TSDI, Inc., 250 W. 57th
St., New York, NY 10019

Columbia U Library, Social Work Library, 420 W.
118th St., New York, NY 10027

Harry R. Moody, Deputy Director, Brookdale Center on
Aging, 425 E. 25th St., New York, NY 10010

Risa Pollack, Dir, Pgm Info & Analysis, NY Assn. for
the Blind, 111 E. 59th St., New York, NY 10011

Ellen P. Simon, Research Consultant, 1185 Park Ave.,
New York, NY 10028

Edwin Yowell, Dir. Off of Mgmt Design, NYC Dept.
Social Services, Mgmt Design, 60 Hudson St.,
10th Floor, New York, NY 11013

Lee Stookey, Project Director, United Parents Assn.,
95 Madison Ave., New York City, NY 10016

Sharon Goodman, Marketing Manager SAIS, Greater NY
Fund/United Way, 99 Park Ave., NY, NY 10016

L. Robinson, Rockland Res Inst-Info Science Div.,
Rockland Research Institute, Orangeburg, NY 10962

Catherine H. Raycraft, Ex. Director, Human Services
Planning Co., 432 State St., Rm 220, Schenectady,
NY 12305

Michael A. King, Dir of Social Work Services, Staten
Island Hospital, 475 Seaview Ave., Staten Island, NY
10305

Joel G. Sacks, Research Consultant, 274 Sycamore St.,
West Hempstead, NY 11552

Sally Ziegler, Executive Director, Day Care Council,
Westchester, 470 Mamaroneck Ave., White Plains,
NY 10605

Mario Rendon, Clinical Director, Leake & Watts
Childrens Home, 463 Hawthorne Ave., Yonkers, NY
10705

North Carolina

Clifford W. Sanford, Executive Director, Group Child
Care Consultants, 300 Battle Hall 056-A, Chapel
Hill, NC 27514

Walter LeMendola, Assoc Prof. E. Carolina U - Allied
Health, Greenville, NC 27834

Ohio

L.J. Bishop, PhD Stud-Case Western, 73 Marvin Ave.,
Akron, OH 44302

E.J. Brown, Asst. Director Social Work, U of Cincinnati
Hosp #743, 234 Goodman St., Cincinnati, OH 45267

Hugh F. Dady, Dir. Social Services, The Christ Hospi-
tal, 2139 Auburn Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45219

Walter A. Rubenstein, Asst. Executive VP, Jewish
Federation, 200 W. Fourth St., Cincinnati, OH 45202

Stephen C. Sunderland, Professor, U of Cincinnati -
Social Work, French Hall (#108), Cincinnati, OH 45221

Claudia J. Coulton, Assoc Prof., Case Western Reserve
U., Schl. Applied Social Sci., Cleveland, OH 44106

Vlatka Ivanisevic, Librarian, SASS Library, Case
Western Reserve, 2035 Abington Rd., Cleveland, OH
44106

Rebecca S. Lombardo, Operations Manager, Div Neigh-
borhood Rev. Dept C.D., 601 Lakeside Ave., Cleveland,
OH 44114

Jack Joseph, Graduate Student, Clinical Psychology,
1490 Slade Ave., Apt 102, Columbus, OH 43220

Esther S. Merves, Grad. Teaching Asst., Ohio State U -
Sociology, 300 Adm Bldg., 190 N. Oval Mall,
Columbus, OH 43210

Eliot R. Shimer, Professor of Social Work, Capitol U,
Dept of Social Work, Capitol University, Columbus, OH
43209

Kathy Schwarz, Coordinator, Services Eval, Franklin Co.
Children Services, 1951 Gantz Rd., Grove City, OH
43123

Rance Hill, Kent State U., Kent OH 44242

Diana B. Bowes, Data Processing Supervisor, Lucas Co.
Children Services Bd., 2500 River Rd., Maumee, OH
43537

Oklahoma

Terry J. Partee, Diskette Connection, P.O. Box 1674
Bethany, OK 73008

Charles Claywood, Program Sup/Social Worker, Dept
Human Services, Institute Service Div., 2108 N.W. 47,
#307, Oklahoma City, OK 73112

Fred W. Romero, Hillcrest Med Ctr., Social Services,
1125 South Trenton, Tulsa, OK 74120

Oregon

Barry S. Kast, Director, Benton Co., Community
Mental Health Programs, 530 N.W. 27th St., Corvallis,
OR 97330

George C. Kjaer, Psychiatrist/Owner, Automated
Personality Testing, 132 E. Broadway Suite 301,
Eugene, OR 97401

Duncan Lindsey, Chairman of the Board, Perfect
Software, Inc., 61 W. 34th St., Eugene, OR 97405

Nancy Koroloff, Portland St. U - Social Work, P.O.
Box 751, Portland, OR 97207

David S. Nichols, Clinical Psychologist, Dammasch
St. Hospital - MH Div., Wilsonville, OR 97070

Pennsylvania

Charles J. Rustici, Center Director, Holy Spirit Hosp.
CMHC, North 21st St., Camp Hill, PA 17011

Jerry G. Balaban, Psychologist, Human Services Inc.,
520 E. Lancaster Ave., Downingtown, PA 19335

Timothy Baker, Dir, Income Maint, Res & Eval. Dept.
of Public Welfare, Rm 430, Health & Welfare Bldg,
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Nancy F. Knepper, Info, Resources Coordinator, PA
Tech Asst for Special Ed., 236 Union Deposit Mail,
Harrisburg, PA 17111

James D. Shields, CRC Coordinator, 222 Cocoa Ave.,
Hershey, PA 17033

Edward M. Esler, D.P. Manager, Children & Youth
Serv—Del Co., Front & Orange Sts., Media, PA 19063

Mark Lafer, Dir, Research & Eval Services, Hazelton-
Nanticoke MHMR Ctr., W. Washington St., Nanticoke,
PA 18634

Daryl C. Dutrow, 219 S. Buckingham Place, Philadelphia,
PA 19104

Kenneth J. Jaros, Consultant (U of Pitt. Professor),
2917 Fernwald Rd., Pittsburgh, PA 15217

Menachem Monnickendam, Teaching Fellow, U of Pitts-
burgh - Social Work, 2237 Cathedral of Learning,
Pittsburgh, PA 15260

Norma Feinberg, Asst. Prof., Duquesne U - Sociology
& Human Services, 515 College Hall, Pittsburgh,
PA 15219

Thomas E. Neudecker, Dir of Continuing Ed., U of
Pittsburgh - Social Work, 2225 Cathedral of Learning,
Pittsburgh, PA 15260

Central Serials, Hillman Library G 74, U of Pitts-
burgh, Pittsburgh, PA 15260

Rhode Island

Peter DiBari, Executive Director, Child & Family Services,
24 School St., Newport, RI 02840

South Carolina

Lynne C. Morris, Assoc Professor, U of S. Carolina,
Social Work, U of South Carolina, Columbia,
SC 29208

C. W. Cokley, Programs Director, Health & Human
Services Policy Research, 1205 Pendleton St.,
(Brown Bldg), Columbia, SC 29201

South Dakota

Harriet Scott, Asst. Professor of Social Work, Augustana
Col Joint Social Work Program, Augustana College,
Sioux Falls, SD 57197

Tennessee

H. F. Coyle, U. of Tenn. - Social Work, P.O. Box 90440,
Nashville, TN 37209

Joy E. Phillips, Business Manager, Martha O'Bryan
Community Ctr., 711 South 7th St., Nashville, TN 37206

Texas

Martha L. Loudder, Associate Director, Catholic Family
Services, Inc., 1522 Van Buren, Amarillo, TX 79102

Judith Birmingham, Asst. to the Dean, UTA - Social
Work, Box 19129, Arlington, TX 76019-0129

Al Cavalier, ARC, Bio-Engineering Pgm., P.O. Box 6109,
Arlington, TX 76011

Ray S. Mayers, Asst. Prof., UTA GSSW, UTA Box 19129,
Arlington, TX 76019-0129

Lawrence Schkade, Professor & Chair, UTA - Systems
Analysis, P.O. Box 19437, Arlington, TX 76019-0437

Dick J. Schoech, Asst. Professor, UTA GSSW, P.O. Box
19129, Arlington, TX 76019-0129

Martin Sundel, Professor, UTA - Social Work, Box 19129
Arlington, TX 76019-0129

Linda Thompson, TDHR Support Program, TX Dept of
Human Resources, Box 5128, Arlington, TX 76011

Hsing Jung Yu, Box 191606 UTA Station, Arlington,
TX 76019

Michael Bruce, TX Dept. of Human Resources, 1300-B
East Anderson Ln, Austin, TX 78752

Dave England, Director, Dept of Human Resources, OIS,
P.O. Box 2960 Mail Code 800B, Austin, TX 78769

Bob Gowdey, The University of Texas, 2609 University/
SWB 4.108, Austin, TX 78712

Catalina Herrerias, Research Asst/Phd Student, U of
Texas at Austin - Social Work, 2609 University, Austin,
TX 78712

Clay Leben, Student, 1402 Larkwood Dr., Austin, TX
78723

DHR Librarian, Dept. of Human Resources, P.O. Box
2960, Austin, TX 78769

Jim Schwab, Asst. Prof., U of Texas - Social Work,
Austin, TX 78712

Rick Shoup, Information Management, Travis Co.
Health Dept., 1313 Sabine St., Austin, TX 78701

Steve Wernet, Doctoral Student, U of TX at Austin,
Social Work, 2609 University Ave., Austin, TX 78712

John F. Yeaman, President, Data Personae, 9400 Hunters
Trace, Austin, TX 78758

Gary L. Pinkerton, P.O. Box 1983, Beaumont, TX 77704

Loye Bardwell, Supervisor, TX DHR, P.O. Box 540,
Daingerfield, TX 75638

Bill Betzen, 6706 Cliffwood, Dallas, TX 75237

Molly Bogen, Executive Director, Senior Citizens of
Dallas, Inc., 712 N. Washington, #202, Dallas, TX 75246

Leti Carson, Office Manager, The Family Resource,
Inc., 4901 W. Lovers Ln., Dallas, TX 75201

John Driggers, Mental Health/Mental Retardation Ctr.,
2710 Stemmons, 1200 Stem Twr N., Dallas, TX 75207

Joe E. Fogle, Admin., Child, Youth & Fam Ser.,
Juliette Fowler Homes, P.O. Box 140129, Dallas, TX
75214

C. E. Hall, Director, Century Computer, 14453 Gillis Rd.,
Dallas, TX 75234

Gerald Hastings, 10635 Stone Canyon Rd., Dallas, TX
75230

Gene Johnstone, Administrator, St. Joseph's Youth Center,
901 S. Madison, Dallas, TX 75208

Andy Macha, Social Work Supervisor, Texas Dept.
of Human Resources, 3077 Newcastle, Dallas, TX
75220

Arnold S. Marks, Executive Director, Jewish Family
Services, 7800 Northaven Rd., Suite B, Dallas, TX
75230

Walt McNew, Director, BB/BS of Dallas, 2920 N. Pearl,
Dallas, TX 75201

Billy Moore, Manager, Research & Evaluation, Commu-
nity Council - Dallas, 1900 Pacific Bldg., Suite 1725,
Dallas, TX 75201

- Sally H. Stansfield**, Administrator, Catholic Counseling Services, 3845 Oak Lawn Ave., Dallas, TX 75219
- Bob Weiss**, Executive Director, Center for Nonprofit Mana., 2904 Swiss Ave., Dallas, TX 75204
- Richard Williamson**, 5200 S. Buckner, Dallas, TX 75227
- Rosemary W. Wilson**, Director of Research, Geriatric Research Instit., 2525 Centerville Rd., Dallas, TX 75228
- Janis Gray**, Dir. Area Agency on Aging, Texoma Regional Planning Com., 10000 Grayson Dr., Denison, TX 75020
- Mikie Pepper**, Counselor, Survival House, 2615 Woodhaven, Denton, TX 76201
- Frotze Kormeier**, Regional Liaison-User Analyst, TX Dept. of Human Resources, P.O. Box 960, Edinburg, TX 78539
- George A. Sutton**, L & H Moor Childrens Home, 1100 Cliff Dr., El Paso, TX 79902
- Cheryl A. Chambers** United Way of Tarrant Co., 210 E. Ninth, Ft. Worth, TX 76102
- Allen T. Harrison**, Child Placement Worker, Tx Dept. of Human Resources, 308 E. 4th St., Ft. Worth, TX 76102
- Susan Hemphill**, 4224 Hawlet, Ft. Worth, TX 76103
- Coleen Shannon**, Professor, UTA GSSW, 7232 Martha Ln., Ft. Worth, TX 76112
- Jack B. Williams**, Senior Citizens of Ft. Worth, 1000 Macon, Ft. Worth, TX 76102
- Joseph M. Terry**, P.O. Box 461343, Garland, TX 75046
- Rebecca Marroquin**, Supervisor, TX DHR, P.O. Box 1063, Gilmer, TX 75644
- Bobbie J. Forsythe**, Program Director, TX DHR, P.O. Box 1026, Henderson, TX 75652
- Tommy Marshall**, Supervisor, TX Dept. of Human Resources, P.O. Box 1026, Henderson, TX 75652
- William E. Buffum**, Assistant Professor, U of Houston, Social Work, Central Campus, U of Houston, Houston, TX 77004
- Rogene G. Calvert**, Research Dept., UW of Texas Gulf Coast, P.O. Box 13668, Houston, TX 77219
- Jean Latting**, U of Houston, Social Work, U of Houston Central Campus, Houston, TX 77004
- Mary R. Lewis**, Professor of Social Work, U of Houston, Social Work, Central Campus, U of Houston, Houston, TX 77004
- Clyde O. McDaniel**, Professor, U of Houston, Central Campus - Social Work, Houston, TX 77004
- Paul R. Raffoul**, Assistant Professor, U of Houston, Social Work, Central Campus, Houston, TX 77004
- Glen Razak**, 1300 Moursund, Houston TX 77030
- Fred Robertson**, Systems Manager, Harris Co. Child Welfare, 4040 Milam, Suite 301, Houston, TX 77006
- Ann Schneider**, Director of Statistics, Neighborhood Ctr-Day Care Assn., P.O. Box 88024, Houston, TX 77004
- Sharon L. Skelton**, Grad Student, U of Houston, 6207 Rutherglenn, Houston, TX 77096
- Frankie Alexander**, Supervisor, DHR, P.O. Box 3507, Longview, TX 75606
- Chrisan H. Russell**, Child Placement Worker III, 405 E. Marshall Ave., Longview, TX 75606
- Texas Tech U**, Health Science Ctr. - Biomed Engineering 3601 4th St., Lubbock TX 79430
- Francine Gillins**, Supervisor, TX Dept of Human Resources, P.O. Box 1748, Marshall, TX 75670
- Margaret D. Maxwell**, Reg. Dir. Social Services, TX Dept. of Human Resources, P.O. Box 767, Nacogdoches, TX 75961
- Pam M. DePue**, Supervisor, TX DHR, P.O. Box 620, Palestine, TX 75801
- Linda Flippen**, Supervisor, TX DHR, P.O. Box 839, Paris, TX 75460
- Loren West**, TX Baptist Childrens Home, P.O. Box 7 Round Rock, TX 78664
- Rosemary Stauber**, Executive Director, Bexar Co. Women's Ctr., 2300 W. Commerce, STE 201, San Antonio, TX 78207
- Betty Gowen**, Supervisor, TX DHR, P.O. Box 484, Sulphur Springs, TX 75482
- Dot Young**, Program Evaluator, Central Counties MHMR Ctr., P.O. Box 518, Temple, TX 76503
- Yvonne Feller**, Supervisor, TX DHR, P.O. Box 6107 Texarkana, TX 75501
- Sam Bell**, Program Director, 318 Clemson, Tyler, TX 75703
- Barbara Kuna**, Staff Development Specialist, TX Dept. of Human Resources, P.O. Box 4300, Tyler, TX 75712
- Kelly Spratlan**, Supervisor, TX Dept. of Human Resources, P.O. Box 4300, Tyler, TX 75712
- Jim Newkham**, Director Social Services, Heart of TX MHMR, Box 1277, 110 S. 12th, Waco, TX 76703
- Gerald Coles**, Wichita Falls CMHC, 1800 Rose St., Wichita Falls, TX 76301
- Chuck R. Voight**, 4515 Maplewood, Timberlane 136, Wichita Falls, TX 76308
- Vermont**
- Kevin L. DeWeaver**, U of VT, Social Work Program, Waterman Building, Burlington, VT 05405
- Virginia**
- James V. Knorrng**, Staff, House Committee on Ed & Labor, 2121 Columbia Pike #509, Arlington, VA 22204
- Washington**
- John F. O'Neill**, Dean, Eastern Washington U, Social Work, Senior Hall, Cheney, WA 99004
- Bruce Duthie**, Director, Psych. Software Specialists, 1776 Fowler #7, Columbia Ctr N., Richland, WA 99352
- Mike Austin**, Profesor, U of Washington - Social Work University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195
- Gary B. Cox**, Research Associate Prof., Dept. of Psychiatry & Behavioral Science, U. of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195
- Rosemary Cunningham**, Doctoral Student, U of Washington - Social Work, School of Social Work JH-30, Seattle, WA 98195
- Computer InfoCenter**, U of Washington, 3737 Brooklyn Ave N.E. #15, Seattle, WA 98105
- Stephen Reinig**, 7747 38th Ave., N.E., Seattle, WA 98115
- Hy Resnick**, Professor, U of Washington - Social Work, 4101 15th Ave. N.E., JH-30, Seattle, WA 98105
- Terry D. Royer**, PhD Student, U of Washington - Social Work, JH-30, Seattle, WA 98195
- Steve Stentz**, Computer Research Consultant, U of Washington, Mailstop JH-30, Seattle, WA 98105
- James A. Buss**, Computing Applications, 605 N. Yakima, Tacoma, WA 98403
- West Virginia**
- Roger A. Lohmann**, Assoc. Professor, West Virginia U Social Work, Morgantown, WV 26506
- Harvey J. Wolf**, Associate Professor, WV U - Dept of Public Admin., West Virginia Univ., Morgantown, WV 26506
- Wisconsin**
- Gerald E. Burns**, Dir Mngmt Info & Data Systems, Mendota MH Institute, 301 Troy Drive, Madison, WI 53704
- Kevin W. Corrado**, Student, Social Work, U of WI, 437 W. Doty St., Madison, WI 53703
- Virginia L. Franks Library**, Uof WI, Social Work, Order #S89553, 425 Henry Hall, Rm 230, Madison, WI 53706
- Hilary Freeman**, Dane Co. Mental Health Ctr., 31 S. Henry St., Madison, WI 53703
- Michael J. Gorodezky**, Private Consultant, 107 N. Roby Rd., Madison, WI 53705
- Tim Griffin**, Consultant, Griffin Associates, 1025 Williamson St., Madison, WI 53703
- John Grist**, Human Services Computing, Inc., 2020 University Ave., Madison, WI 53705
- Steve McMurry**, U of Wisconsin - Social Work, 425 Henry Hall, Madison, WI 53712
- Mel Morgenbesser**, Associate Dir., U of WI, Social Work, 425 Henry Hall, Madison, WI 53706
- Wandal W. Winn**, Physician, U of WI, Dept. of Psychiatry 600 Highland Ave., Madison, WI 53792
- Daniel H. Frankel**, Computer Programmer, 1204 E. Chambers, Milwaukee, WI 53212
- Wallace J. Gingerich**, Associate Professor, U of WI at Milwaukee - Social Work, P.O. Box 786, Milwaukee, WI 53201
- Alfred L. Kasproicz**, Executive Director, St. Aemilian Child Care Ctr., 8901 W. Capital Dr., Milwaukee, WI 53222
- Richard Kass**, Co. Dept. of Social Services, 1220 W. Vliet St., Rm 113, Milwaukee, WI 53205
- James Andreoni**, Program Coordinator, St. Aemilian HCT, P.O. Box 252, Port Washington, WI 53074
- Kenneth K. Crass**, Div. of Vocational Rehabilitation, 2416 Steware Square, Wausau, WI 54401
- Australia**
- T. Cole**, Head Social Worker, Peter MacCallum Hospital, 481 Little Lonsdale St., Melbourne, Australia 3000
- Norman J. Smith**, Senior Lecturer in Social Work, Monash U - Social work, Clayton, Victoria, Australia 3168
- A. Armstrong**, Psychologist, U of Melbourne, Parkville, Melbourne Australia 3052
- Elizabeth Widdop**, Librarian, Ballarat College Adv. Ed., Gear Ave., Ballarat, Victoria Australia 3350
- Murray A. Mountain**, Manager/administrator, Association for the Blind, 7 Main St., Brightin Beach, Victoria Australia 3188
- Floyd Bolitho**, La Trobe U., Social Work, La Trobe University, Bundoora, Victoria Australia 3083
- K. Wyman**, Student Services, Chisholm Inst Tech., P.O. Box 197, Caulfield East, Victoria Australia 3145
- Valerie Adams**, Health Commisision of Victoria, 32 Roochsure St., East Cumberwell, Victoria Australia 3124
- Ann Turner**, Rehabilitation Counselor, Voc. Rehabilitation Service, 516 Victoria Parade, East Melbourne, Victoria Australia 3002
- Lois J. McDonough**, Social Worker, 177 Heatherdale Rd., Vermont, Melbourne, Victoria Australia 3133
- Kirk Warren**, 28 The Esplanada Clifton Hill, Melbourne, Victoria Australia
- Barry McIntyre**, Lecturer/Librarian, 78 Jeffrey Dr., Ringwood, Victoria Australia 3134
- Ken Morrison**, Social Worker, 65 Sophia Gve., Tecoma Victoria (Melb) Australia 3160
- Jerry Miller**, Senior Project Officer, Child, Adol & Family Health, 285-296 South Terrace, Adelaide, South Australia 5000
- Canada**
- Ray Carlson**, Professor, Dalhousie U. - Social Work Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada B3H 3J5
- James Gripton**, Professor, U of Calgary - Social Welfare, 2500 U. Dr., N.W., Calgary, Alberta Canada T2N 1N4
- John R. McDonald**, Asst. Dean, Undergraduate Pgm., U. of Calgary - Social Welfare, 2500 University Dr., N.W., Calgary, Alberta Canada T2N-1N4
- Joyce Archibald**, Manager, User Service, Social Services & Community Health, 10030 - 107 St. 7th St. Plaza, Edmonton, Alberta Canada T5J 3E4
- Glynis Bauer**, Information Co-Ordinator, Aid Service of Edmonton, 203, 10711 - 107 Ave., Edmonton, Alberta Canada T5H 0W6
- R.W. Nutter**, Faculty, U. of Alberta - Social Welfare, 11051 Saskatchewan Dr., Edmonton, Alberta Canada T6G 2B4
- Rod Rode**, Social Worker, Family Service Assn., 9919-106 St., Edmonton, Alberta Canada T5X-3A3
- Margaret E. Goodman**, Dir of Preventive Pgms., Children's Aid Society, 340 9th St., Brandon, Manitoba Canada R7A 6C2
- Mrs. L. Block**, Library Coordinator, Helen Mann Library, U of Manitoba, Social Work, Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada R3T 2N2
- Bruce Tefft**, Professor, U of Manitoba - Psych Dept., Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada R3T 2N2
- Frank Hand**, Dir. of Systems Development, Dept. of Social Services, 364 Argyle St., 1st Floor-DP, Fredericton, New Brunswick Canada E3B 5H1
- Purchasing Agent**, Cambridge Memorial Hospital, 700 Coronation Blvd, Cambridge, Ontario Canada N1R 3G2
- A Simon Mielniczuk**, Coordinator, Flemingdon Neighborhood Services, 747 Don Mills Rd., #112, Don Mills, Ontario Canada M3C 1T2
- Claud R. Guilbault**, Dir. Social Work Dept., Ottawa General Hosp., Social Work, 501 Smyth Rd., Ottawa, Ontario Canada K1H 8M2
- Nadya Tarasoff**, Research Director, Social Planning Council of Ottawa, 256 King Edward Ave., Ottawa, Ontario Canada K1N 7M1
- Dan Crocco**, Psychologist, Mental Health Center, Drawer 698, Penetanguishene, Ontario Canada LOK-1PO
- East Metro Youth Service**, Mental Health Agency, 777 Warden Ave., Suite #9, Scarborough, Ontario Canada M1L 4C3
- Michael Jewell**, 169 Church St., Stratford, Ontario Canada N5A 2R4
- Diane Chaumont**, Administrative Asst., Children's Aid Society, 12 Elm North, Timmins, Ontario Canada P4N 6A1
- Tim Drainin**, Jesuit Centre, 947 Queen St., E., Toronto, Ontario Canada M4M 1J9
- Camille Lambert**, Research Professor, U. of Toronto 246 Bloom St., West, Toronto, Ontario Canada M5S 1A1

Bob McFadden, Lecturer, U Toronto, Faculty of Social Work, 246 Bloor St., W., Toronto, Ontario Canada M5S 1A1

Arnold J. Love, Senior Associate, Community Concern Assoc., Ltd., 112 St. Clair Ave. W., #503, Toronto, Canada M4V 2Y3

W. R. Woods, Social Planning & Res Consultant, WR Woods & Associates, 18 - 324 Regina St., North, Waterloo, Ontario Canada N2J 3B7

Robert G. Chandler, Associate Professor, U. of Windsor - Social Work, Windsor, Ontario Canada N9B 3P4

F. C. Hansen, Assoc Prof/Research Coord., U. of Windsor Social Work, Windsor, Ontario Canada N9B 3P4

Madeleine Paradis, Dir., Computer Services, Ville Marie Social Services, 4018 St. Catherine St., W., Montreal, Quebec Canada H3Z 1P2

M. L. Dhar, Windsor Western Hospital, I.O.D.E. Unit, 1453 Prince Rd., Windsor Canada N9C 3Z4

Czechoslovakia

Jiri Laciga, Psychologist, Psychiatric Hosp., Havlicuv Brod 58023, Husova 1872, 58001, Havlicuv Brod, Czechoslovakia

England

Nigel Robinson, 141 Rupert St., Norwich, England NR2 2AX

Peter Marsh, Lecturer in Social Work, U of Sheffield - Sociological Studies, U of Sheffield, Sheffield, England S10 2TN

Tom D. Wilson, Reader in Information Studies, U of Sheffield - Info Studies, University of Sheffield Sheffield, England S10 2TN

David Streatfield, Project Head—EMIE Project, Foundation Ed Res-Eng/Wales, The Mere, Upton Park, Slough, Berks England SL1 2DQ

Carole Sutton, Lecturer in Psychology, Leicester Poly-Social & Community Studies, Leicester Polytechnic, Scraptoft, Leicester England LE7 9SU

Laurence Moseley, Senior Lecturer-Computer Sci., U. College, Computer Science, Univ. College Singleton Park, Swansea, United Kingdom SA2 8PP

France

Herold Heyward, Pommiers La Placette, 38340 Voreppe, Grenoble, France

Israel

Rachel Kats, Oren St. 31/45, P.O. Box 3612, Haifa, Israel 31036

Ram A Cnaan, Ministry Labor & Social Affairs, P.O. Box 1260, Jerusalem 91000, Israel

Resources and Materials

Organizations

The Networking Institute, Inc. was founded to assist networks and to help the new profession of networking by providing newsletters, reports, directories, etc. Write c/o Jessica Lipnack & Jeffrey Stamps, P.O. Box 66, West Newton, MA 02165.

Databases

Quality of Health Care Data Base contains the full text of Federal and State Law and regulations aimed at assuring quality health care, as well as standards for licensure and other related laws. It is searchable through Project Share, P.O. Box 2309, Rockville, MD 20852.

Newsletters & Journals

Closing the Gap is a bimonthly newsletter on the use of microcomputers in special education and by the handicapped. Write P.O. Box 68, Henderson, MN 56044.

The Catalyst is the bimonthly newsletter of the Western Center for Microcomputers in Special Education, Inc. Write at 1259 El Carnino Real, Suite 275, Menlo Park, CA 94025.

Bulletins on Science & Technology for the Handicapped is a quarterly publication of American Assn. for the Advancement of Science, Office of Opportunities in Science, 1515 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20005.

Communication Outlook is the quarterly newsletter of the International Action Group for Communication Enhancement. Write c/o Al Lab, Computer Science Dept., Michigan State U., East Lansing, MI 48824.

ADCUS News is the bimonthly newsletter of the Association for Development of Computer-Based Instructional Systems. Write 215 S. Main St., Clarion, IA 50525.

Healthcare Microcomputing is a newsletter on microcomputing for healthcare professionals. Write c/o Kurt Oelschlagel, 6600 France Ave., S. Suite 520, Minneapolis, MN 55435.

MicroPsych is a newsletter which functions as an informal forum of communication for psychologists interested in using microcomputers. Write c/o Cyndi McDaniel, Psychology Dept., Northern KY U., Highland Heights, KY 41076.

On-Line: Issues in Computer Education is a biannual newsletter for computer educators which contains information on new ideas, classroom methods and common problems of computer educators. Write c/o South-Western Publishing Co., 5101 Madison Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45227.

SCOPE (Scholarly Communication: Online Publishing and Education) is a bimonthly newsletter published at Queens College, Flushing, NY, 11367 for the academic community. The section from one of their issues below has specific relevance to academics.

Among the causes for the failure to bring to computer applications the same brilliance as characterizes computer design, the shortage of qualified personnel must rank near the top of the list.

The absence of people to match the hardware can be traced to two complementary forces, of which the first is lack of centripetal pull from the academic environment itself. Even if this were a time of expanding job opportunities, few educators would be willing to base their claims to tenure and promotion on such poorly understood accomplishments as creating educational software. When only "original research" is exalted and even textbooks are denigrated, it is a foolhardy gambler who seeks advancement in his career by means of an activity that has achieved no official recognition. In the social sciences and humanities, one

never hears of prizes or fellowships being awarded for distinguished educational software. Committees representing conventional wisdom do not know how to evaluate it, and there must be a suspicion that scholars engaged in creating it are subverting their principles to the lure of money.

The other force, pulling computer-sophisticated people away from academe as strongly as the institution is pushing them out, is the lure of jobs in more-or-less conventional computing. Their careers stymied unless they conform to patterns of research dictated by those who do not recognize the computer's potential, increasing numbers of younger educators are going into programming, systems design, marketing, and computer-related research. While their presence in non-academic environments may have a beneficial effect, their loss to scholarly research and teaching may be irreparably damaging. Most of them, having originally chosen academic careers, would probably prefer to remain in them. Only the twin pressures, to abandon computers if they stay in academe or to carry their expertise where it is valued, could succeed in parting from the profession to which they devoted years of training. And once lost to teaching and scholarship, these esteemed individuals are not likely to return.

Micro News is the newsletter of the Microcomputers in Planning Assn. c/o Robert L. Stockman, 10748 100th St., S.E., Alto, MI 49302. One letter in Vol III #2 from Tom Christoffel contains some good ideas for CUSS members.

Tom brings to our attention a letter from a handicapped micro user. This person is trying to make a living out of his home. Tom wonders if planning agencies can make use of people in this circumstance, as resource people. What do such people have to offer? Well, everything you can do on a micro at the office you can do on a micro at home. If necessary, disks can be mailed or otherwise delivered between the locations, or communications can be done over the phone line.

Perhaps planning agencies could check with local vocational rehab agencies in their area, to see if they're aware of this resource. Are they training people to use micros and are they helping them find a place in the job marketplace? Does that agency have a list of "at-home" microcomputer users and/or programmers, for employers to call when seeking such skills?

Other Networks is a newsletter about the networking of people from the Public Interest Media Project, P.O. Box 14066, Phila, PA, 19123.

Human Resources is a newsletter from Human Resources Department of the National Easter Seal Society, 2023 W. Ogden Ave., Chicago, IL 60612. It's focus is on personnel, compensation and benefits, and management training.

Reset c/o Mike McCullough, 90 E. 7th St., #3A, New York, NY 10009 is a newsletter for radically-inclined and socially conscious computer users.

Articles

Computer Technology for the Handicapped: A Literature profile by P. Browning and G. Nave. Rehab Research & Training Center, Clinical Services Bldg. U. of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403. The Computing Teacher Vol 10 #6 (Feb 1983) pp. 56-59.

Self Help Software InforWorld Vol 5 #36 (Sept 12, 1983)

An Instrument-Based Program Monitoring System: A New Tool for Day Care Monitoring (Overview & Indicator Checklist), 3 papers from Richard Fiene, Information Systems Director, PA Dept of Public Welfare, Office of Children, Youth & Families, P.O. Box 2675, Harrisburg, PA 17105.

Computer Utilization for Practice Based Decision Making: Contemporary Social Work Training Methods and Computer Assisted Evaluation and Decision Making in Human Service Organizations by Aaron M. Bower, John L. Hankins, Paula S. Nurius and Elizabeth Mutschler, U of MI School of Social Work, 1065 Frieze Bldg., Ann Arbor, MI 48104.

Call for Papers, Software, etc.

Transportation Software Descriptions Wanted: As you may know, the publication, "Microcomputers in Transportation, Software and Source Book," is published periodically by UMTA and FHWA. The next publication is scheduled for late summer of this year. The bulk of the publication consists of software descriptions submitted by local, State, and Federal agencies, consultants, and academicians. These software descriptions have been valuable in informing transportation professionals of the kinds of microcomputer applications in use. The purpose of this letter is to invite you to submit transportation software descriptions which could be listed in our next issue of the Software and Source Book. Updates to entries already in the book are also welcome.

If you are listed as a contact for a particular software package, you should be prepared for requests for information about the software. If you feel the software is not useful for anyone else, but that someone might benefit from knowing the development process, we encourage you to submit an item. The software may be useful to others, but you may not want to deal with the process of sending it out or discussing it with others. In this case, please forward information on the item to the MTP Support Center or TIME Support Center and request they distribute the software.

Software descriptions of interest to transportation planners should be sent to the Microcomputers In Transportation user group:

MTP Support Center
DOT/Transportation Systems Center
DTS-62
Kendall Square
Cambridge, MA 02142
(617) 494-2247

Software descriptions of interest to those in transit operations should be sent to the Transit Industry Exchange:

Time Support Center
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Civil Engineering Department
Troy, NY 12181
(518) 266-6227

The Haworth Press, Inc., Announces the forthcoming publication of a new quarterly journal, *Computers In The Schools*, under the editorship of D. LaMont Johnson, PhD. The journal will be editorially based at the College of Education at Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas.

The new journal will be developed as a multidisciplinary professional quarterly aimed at serious educational and school professionals. It will be designed as a forum for assessment and evaluation of the broadening applications of computers in the school setting and aims to fill the gap between the magazine literature and research-oriented disciplinary journals.

Dr. Johnson, editor of the new journal, is coauthor of *Computers, Teaching and Learning* (dillithium Press, 1983) as well as the author of over thirty professional articles in the educational/school psychology field.

According to Dr. Johnson: "Recent releasing of printed material dealing with computers is akin to opening a flood gate. There is a need to begin sorting everything out—to begin testing our hunches and intuitions through research. Authors need to begin looking down the road at long-range implications before plunging headlong down some dead-end paths. We also need to begin developing a coherent bond of theory to guide practice and help us make choices. *Computers In The Schools* will not only consider the theoretical/philosophical bases of the small computer in the schools but will emphasize its practical applications. It will consider present implications as they relate to past effects and future trends. A major goal of the journal will be to enable educators, special services personnel, school psychologists, counselors, and directors or supervisors of computer centers to talk to each other about the implications of what they are doing. The journal will also provide an opportunity for those who are involved in development to share new ways of tapping the power of the ubiquitous small computer."

The new journal is scheduled for publication in early Spring 1984. A complete Instructions for Authors brochure is available from D. LaMort Johnson, PhD, Editor, *Computers In The Schools*, 6905 Evanston, Lubbock, Texas 79424. Inquiries must be accompanied by a stamped,

self-addressed envelope.

Information on subscriptions can be obtained from The Haworth Press, Inc., 28 East 22 Street, New York, New York 10010.

Books & Reports Received

Computer Security Handbook: The Practitioner's Bible from Computer Security Institute, 43 Boston Post Rd., Northborough, MA 01532.

Microcomputers in Transportation: Software and Source Book (two volumes, Jan & Mar 1983), **Getting Started in Microcomputers: Selected Readings, Vol 1**, and **Selecting a Single User System: Selected Readings, Vol 2**, all four monographs are available from the Microcomputers in Transportation Planning User Support Center, Transportation Systems Center, Cambridge, MA 02142.

Compilation of Social Indicators: Brevard Co. FL from Paul E. Brevard, Health & Social Services Div., 2575 N. Courtenay Pky, Merritt Island, FL 32952.

LAMP (Literature Analysis of Microcomputer Publications) is a new publication devoted exclusively to the indexing of periodicals in the field of microcomputers. Write LAMP, c/o Mort Wasserman, 200 Route 17, Mahwah, NJ 07430.

Software Catalogues Received From

Psychometric Systems, P.A., 7500 Beachnut Suite 308, Houston, TX 77074

Diagnostic Specialists, Inc., 1170 N. 660 W., Orem, Utah 84057.

Upcoming Events, Conferences and Meetings

1983-84 Schedule of Management Training Institutes of the National Easter Seal Society are listed below. For more information, contact Cheryl Van Zandt, National Easter Seal Society, 2023 West Ogden Ave., Chicago, IL 60612.

Chicago, IL, Sept 13-16, 1983, *The Effective Nonprofit Executive* by U of IL, School of Public Health.

Amston, CT, Oct 3-5, 1983, *Human Resources Management* by Brown, Burke & Assoc., Inc.

Palo Alto, CA, Oct 31-Nov 1, 1983, *The Microcomputer: An Effective Tool in Managing Rehabilitation Services* by Touche Ross & Co.

Las Vegas, NV, Jan 10-12, 1984, *Human Resources Management* by Brown, Burke, & Assoc., Inc.

Dallas, TX, Apr 16-18, 1984, *The Microcomputer: An Effective Tool in Managing Rehabilitation Services* by Touche Ross & Co.

Chicago, IL, May 21-23, 1984, *Financial Management for Non-profit Rehabilitation Agencies*.

Orlando, FL, Jun 25-27, 1984, *Strategic Planning* by McDonald Management Training Group.

10th International Information Management Exposition & Conference, Oct. 10-13, 1983 at New York Coliseum, NY. Over 300 suppliers and 275 speakers to demonstrate and present on information management.

Joint Conference of the Evaluation Network & Evaluation Research Society, Oct. 20-22, 1983, Chicago. Deadline for papers is 30 June 83. Write Emil J. Posavac, Loyola U. of Chicago, Psychology Dept., 6525 N. Sheridan Rd., Chicago, IL 60625 or Robert B. Ingle, 515 Enderis Hall, U. of WI-Milwaukee, P.O. Box 413, Milwaukee, WI 53201.

Symposium on Computer Applications in Medical Care, Oct. 23-26, Baltimore, MD. Write SCAMC, George Washington U. Medical Ctr., 2300 K. St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037.

Third Annual Conference on Management Information Systems, Oct 24-25, 1983, New York, Contact David Bresnick or Ellen Goldner, Baruch College, Center for Management Development and Organization Research, 17 Lexington Ave., Box 520, New York, NY 10010.

"MIS: The MICRO Link" is the theme of the third annual conference on Management Information Systems sponsored by the Center for Management of Baruch College. The conference, to be held on October 24th and 25th in New York City will examine the microcomputer's potential for revolutionizing the jobs of managers.

Four major topics to be covered at the conference are: Executive Systems: The Basic Options; Centralization vs. Decentralization of DP; Decision Support Systems; and Micros and OA.

"MIS: The MICRO Link" will address these issues in panels and demonstration on the first day of the symposium, and in intensive hands-on workshops covering specific topics and developments on the second day.

The sessions will be directed toward EDP and non-EDP Managers who are using and are planning for the use of microcomputers as a managers tool. Attendees can expect to obtain information on specific applications, and become familiar with the benefits and pitfalls of widespread use of micros in the total MIS picture.

10th Annual Computer Security Conference, Nov 7-9, 1983, New York Statler Hotel. Write Computer Security Institute, 43 Boston Post Rd., Northborough, MA 01532.

Council on Social Work Education, 1984 Annual Program Meeting, March 11-14, 1984, Detroit Renaissance Ctr., MI. Pre-APM Symposium on Community Organization and Administration scheduled for March 10. Write CSWE, 111 Eighth Ave., Suite 501, New York, NY 10011.

1984 National Council of Community Mental Health Centers Annual Meeting, May 30 - June 2, 1984, New Orleans, LA. For details, write NCCMHC, 6101 Montrose Rd., #360, Rockville, MD., 20852.

The theme of this years conference is "1984: Visions Toward 2001". This is the conference where vendors interested in selling systems to CMHCs demonstrate their systems.

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